

Palestinians seek funding extension

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestinians have asked donor nations to continue bankrolling their daily government expenses until they become self-sufficient, a top economic official said Wednesday. The donor nations agreed in September to support the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) budget through March 1995. "This from the beginning was an optimistic point of view," said Samir Abdullah, a director of a Palestinian agency in charge of administering the foreign aid. "If the donors adhere to this agreement and don't understand the miscalculation made at the time, the Palestinian government will be in big trouble," Dr. Abdullah added. The running costs of the Palestinian autonomy established last May in Gaza and Jericho are estimated at \$600 million annually. The Palestinian economy has suffered from extended closures imposed by Israel. Dr. Abdullah said Israel has also delayed transferring to the Palestinians revenue from value-added and other taxes collected on their behalf. "This tax clearance is a major source of revenue, over the local purchase tax and local income taxes," Dr. Abdullah said.

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Arafat promises to cooperate with Israel

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat met with Israel's Police Minister Moshe Shahal in the self-rule Gaza Strip for the first time Wednesday, and promised to cooperate for Israeli security.

"I repeat that we understand totally Israel's security needs," Mr. Arafat told reporters after a two-hour meeting with Mr. Shahal.

"We will try to overcome (problems) with more joint cooperation," Mr. Arafat said, adding that the talks also covered Palestinian prisoners, safe passages between the autonomous Gaza Strip and Jericho and the borders of self-rule areas.

Israel has pressed Mr. Arafat to do more to prevent attacks by Palestinian militants before proceeding to the next stage of autonomy: Israeli army redeployment on the West Bank and Palestinian elections.

Mr. Shahal said he brought best wishes from the government to Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian people for the 'Eid Al Fitr holiday starting Thursday.

Chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Shaath said no agreements were expected from Wednesday's meeting.

"He (Shahal) came also to listen very carefully, and our primary problem was the prisoners... we appreciate the fact that he was not here to make decisions," Dr. Shaath said.

He said Mr. Shahal would report back to Prime Minister Rabin, and "some acts of improvement will take place."

The PLO has demanded the release from Israeli jails of more than 5,000 Palestinian prisoners.

Asked about negotiations on a final settlement with Israel, Mr. Arafat said "we are ready."

"Final talks should start not exceeding the beginning of the third year" of autonomy, he said.

The 1993 self-rule agreement scheduled talks on the final status of the territories and Jerusalem no later than the start of the third year of autonomy, which would mean by May 1996.

Israeli ministers said meanwhile five weeks of calm are paving the way for Israel to negotiate the long-delayed redeployment of troops on the West Bank for the next stage of Palestinian self-rule.

"The future of the peace process is based on attacks," said Justice Minister David Libai.

"If there are none for two or three more weeks the question of the second phase of autonomy will be settled."

Israeli stabs Arab
A Jew stabbed and wounded a Palestinian in the back in Arab East Jerusalem's Wall of Jerusalem on Wednesday, police said.

"The victim was taken to hospital in (West) Jerusalem with moderate wounds," a police spokeswoman said. The attacker was in custody, she said.

Police said the Israeli, about 24 years old, was talking with border policemen on patrol when suddenly he brandished a knife and stabbed an Arab youth in the back.

Security Council debates settlements; action unlikely

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The Security Council has launched a debate on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories but it was seen unlikely that it would adopt any serious action after the U.S. asserted that the council should stay out of the Middle East peace process.

Israel's U.N. Ambassador Gad Yaacobi declared Wednesday that the world body's failure to censor Jewish settlement on Tuesday was "a major success."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) sought a condemnation of continued settlement, but the Security Council made no decision in New York on Tuesday night.

"I am pleased that the Security Council took no decision at the meeting, it's a major success for Israel," Ambassador Gad Yaacobi told Israeli Radio over the telephone from New York.

The PLO representative at the U.N. admitted he had failed to achieve his goal, Mr. Yaacobi said.

Israel Radio said the United States put pressure on other Security Council members to block any resolution which might harm the peace process.

PLO envoy Nasser Al-Kidwa, backed by Egypt, demanded "the immediate and total cessation of any settlement activity."

The council was to meet again Wednesday to resume its consideration of the situation in the occupied Arab territories.

Speakers at the council on Tuesday said Israel's resumption of settlements in the occupied Arab territories posed a serious threat to the success of the peace process and must be halted immediately.

Such settlement activity represented an effort to pre-empt future negotiations on the question of settlements, by establishing a pre-existing situation on the ground, at a time when Israel had been expected to engage in confidence-building measures in support of the peace process, many speakers said.

Speaking on behalf of the European Union, the representative of France said the settler colonies were in contravention of the 1949 Geneva Convention, as well as of the Israel-PLO declaration of principles — a view expressed by many speakers.

The EU appealed to Israel to resolve the matter while respecting international law and the commitments it had made. He urged a prompt resumption of negotiations on all outstanding issues.

Statements were also made by the delegates of Germany, Oman, Nigeria, China, Czech Republic, Argentina, Tunisia, Malaysia, Iran, Pakistan, Morocco, Brunei, Darussalam, Turkey and Sudan, as well as by the observers for the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and for Palestine, and the chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

U.S. Ambassador Edward Gnehm said while the United Nations has a vital part to play in the Middle East peace process, pushing the Security Council to take a decision on Israeli settlements in the occupied territories "can only sour the atmosphere and deflect the parties from the need to work together."

Mr. Gnehm said the United States supports "the vital work of the United Nations agencies and the U.N. special coordinator to improve economic conditions. We must disapprove, however, of any effort to redirect a negotiating process agreed to previously by the parties."

The council held the debate at the request of Djibouti, the current chairman of the Arab Group.

Citing "the dangerous consequences of (Israeli) activities on the Palestinian people and on the Middle East peace process," Djibouti Ambassador Roble Olhayed said a mood of "mounting disenchantment" is permeating the Arab world as a result of a near total lack of progress in the Palestinian-Israeli talks.

Mr. Gnehm told the council that Secretary of State Warren Christopher is visiting the Middle East in early March to explore ways to consolidate the agreements already reached and lay the groundwork for future progress.

Tehran implicitly confirms missiles in Gulf deploying

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran on Wednesday implicitly confirmed a U.S. report that it had deployed anti-aircraft missiles on its islands at the entrance to the Gulf but insisted such actions were strictly for defence.

"It is surprising to us that the United States would start such a noisy propaganda against our air defence readiness, as if U.S. officials have forgotten recent threats of attack by the Zionist regime," Foreign Ministry spokesman Morteza Sarmadi said in a statement sent to AFP.

U.S. Joint Chief of Staff General John Shalikashvili said Tuesday that U.S. reconnaissance had spotted Iran putting Hawk missiles onto launchers on the islands. He did not name the location.

Western military sources in Dubai quoted by Reuters identified the site as the Sirri Islands.

Western and Arab diplomats in the Gulf said the United States saw the deployment as significant, even though U.S. President Bill Clinton, speaking in Washington on Tuesday, played down the threat, saying there was no cause for immediate concern.

The deployment meant Iran now had missiles on both sides of a deep-water channel that loaded tankers are obliged to use when plying their trade between Gulf oil ports and consumers, mainly in Asia and the West, Western and Arab diplomats in the Gulf said.

Iran is involved in a territorial dispute with the United Arab Emirates over three islands — Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb — which it controls at the entrance to the vital waterway.

Gen. Shalikashvili said the reconnaissance had also detected the Iranians moving artillery into forward positions on the islands in the Strait of Hormuz, through which one-fifth of the world's crude oil is shipped.

But Mr. Sarmadi said the United States was "undertaking a vain effort to portray Iran's defensive readiness as a threat against its Persian Gulf Arab neighbours and as a threat to world trade."

"Our neighbours are well aware of the destructive role of the Zionist regime and its threats against security and stability of the region," he said.

Earlier on Wednesday, the official Iranian news agency IRNA quoted an unnamed Iranian diplomat in Greece as denying the U.S. missiles report as "unfounded and false."

Gen. Shalikashvili said Iran has the potential of replacing Iraq as the main military threat in the Gulf region around the turn of the century.

Iranian state radio fired back that "the United States wants to portray Iran as a menace to the Persian Gulf countries and limit the influence of its Western rivals in the region."

The Nicosia-based Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday that the bill put forward by Senator Alfonse D'Amato would end all U.S. commercial and financial transactions with the Islamic republic.

President Hafez Al Assad was aware of the domestic restraints faced by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Elections are scheduled in Israel for next year, and a majority of Israelis oppose giving back most of the Golan.

Mr. Assad recently wrote to U.S. President Bill Clinton that he has concluded that Mr. Rabin may be losing some of his ability to deliver on an agreement, according to CNN.

Israel's deputy foreign minister, Yossi Beilin, said Wednesday that Israel and Syria only had a short time to conclude a treaty.

Israeli tanks hit Lebanese villages

NABATIEH (AP) — Israeli tanks blasted villages in South Lebanon Wednesday as gunboats carried a fishing blockade along the region's coast into a fourth week.

Police said no casualties were reported in the day-break barrages on Jabal Rafih, a hilltop stronghold of the Hizbollah group facing an Israeli-occupied border enclave.

Also targeted were the villages of Milta and Loweizeh and olive groves leading to the central sector of the enclave, which Israeli calls a "security zone," said a police statement.

The statement, released in the market town of Nabatieh, said guerrillas of Hizbollah struck back with mortar rounds from the highlands of Iqlim Al Tuffah.

The duels came hours after an Israeli helicopter gunship demolished an unfinished two-storey house suspected of being a guerrilla hideout facing the western sector of the "security zone" with two air-to-surface Tow missiles. No casualties were reported.

The heightening tension on the last active Arab-Israeli war front clouded next week's Middle East shuttle by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who will try to break a year-old stalemate in Syrian and Lebanese peace talks with Israel.

Meanwhile, hundreds of fishermen remained idle along a 50-kilometre stretch of South Lebanon's Mediterranean coastline, blocked by Israeli gunboats since Feb. 8.

Police said Israeli gunboats cruised about five kilometres off the coast of Tyre, the fishing harbours of Adoun and Sarafand and the oil port of Zahran, often firing warning shots.

Israeli leaders say the blockade was intended to pressure the Beirut government into disarming Hizbollah and ending alleged Lebanese army harassment of travellers in and out of the "security zone."

Foreign Minister Faris Bouez said the military restrictions were aimed at preventing car bombs coming out of the enclave. He said Lebanon could not disarm fighters against occupation before Israel withdraws unconditionally from the "security zone."

Quoted by the news agency Interfax at a Defence Ministry conference, he said 90 per cent of the rebels' equipment had been captured or destroyed.



U.S. Marines patrol a position on Green Beach to assist with the final withdrawal of U.N. peacekeeping troops (AFP photo)

Militia takes over Mogadishu airport after U.N. forces leave

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Somali militia forces took control of Mogadishu airport and chased away looters who invaded the airfield after the withdrawal Wednesday of the last U.N. peacekeepers from the city.

The militiamen, aboard armed four-wheel-drive battlewagons known as "technicals," took up positions around the airport shortly after the last foreign troops left under the guard of a U.S.-led multinational force.

The fighters were all members of the Habr Gedir clan of the most powerful Mogadishu warlord, Mohammad Farah Aided, who later visited the area.

Gen. Aided, who was hunted fruitlessly for five months by U.S.-led forces in 1993, toured the airport directly under beach redoubts manned by U.S. and Italian Marines covering the U.N. withdrawal, his followers said.

His militia and a rival force loyal to the self-styled interim president of Somalia, Ali Mahdi Mohammad, announced last week the creation of a joint force to take over the city's port and airport after the U.N. withdrawal, but no members of Mr. Ali Mahdi's Abgal clan were seen at the airport.

The clans have been battling for control of Mogadishu since the January 1991 ouster of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre.

Before taking up positions, the militia chased away hundreds of civilian looters who had invaded the airport as the last Pakistani U.N. troops pulled back to the city's port to board ships and leave the country.

As the last Pakistanis were leaving the zone, a U.S. Marine sharpshooter fired shots in the air to warn the militia fighters not to approach the U.S. and Italian soldiers deployed to guard the U.N. withdrawal.

Two Italian attack helicopters swooped over the runway in what the commander of a U.S.-led, six-nation task force protecting the U.N. withdrawal told journalists was another warning.

U.S. Super Cobra attack helicopters swooped over the chaotic scene.

Rebuilding Grozny could take three years

MOSCOW (AFP) — A senior Russian official estimated Wednesday that rebuilding the war-battered Chechnya capital of Grozny would take three years and at least three trillion rubles (\$680 million).

Russian Construction Minister Yefim Basin said in an interview with the news agency Interfax that his estimate covered the restoration of houses and social services, but did not include repairs to roads or Grozny's airport.

Large parts of Grozny have been left in ruins after massive Russian bombardments of the city since December to drive out its rebel Chechen defenders. Russian forces seized control of most of Grozny in mid-February.

Mr. Basin, speaking at the Russian military base of Mordok in North Ossetia, near Chechnya, said 3.5 million square metres of residential apartments had been destroyed in Grozny, along with 37 schools, 12 hospitals and 14 clinics.

The minister said the Russian authorities intended to rebuild 800,000 square metres of living accommodation and 15 schools this year.

"However, construction can be started only after hostilities are stopped and mines are cleared," he said.

The Russian military declared this week that its forces had completely sealed off the city, preventing Chechen secessionist rebels from entering or leaving. It said rebels still in Grozny were being hunted down.

But shelling of some parts of the capital continued, particularly in the southern Chernorechye district.

Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said that the strength of rebel forces in Chechnya had been considerably weakened because Russian forces had knocked out 90 per cent of their weapons.

Quoted by the news agency Interfax at a Defence Ministry conference, he said 90 per cent of the rebels' equipment had been captured or destroyed.

Iraq rejects proposal to raise limited oil export

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq on Wednesday condemned a U.S. proposal to raise the limit of oil Baghdad could sell under U.N. resolutions as a manoeuvre to maintain crippling sanctions.

Madeleine Albright, Washington's ambassador to the U.N., said in Prague Monday that the U.S. was ready to support raising the limit of oil Iraq could sell under U.N. resolutions 706 and 712 to provide humanitarian relief to the Iraqi people.

The daily Babel, run by President Saddam Hussein's son Uday, said Ms. Albright's offer was a "underhand manoeuvre aimed at spreading confusion, changing the current thinking (of the U.N. Security Council) and maintaining the embargo."

Baghdad had rejected the two U.N. resolutions which required monitoring of the proceeds from the sale of \$1.6 billion of oil, saying they were a violation of its sovereignty.

The U.S. and Britain opposes the lifting of the oil and trade embargo imposed by the U.N. after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Ms. Albright is on a tour of U.N. Security Council countries to build up a "blocking coalition" against French and Russian moves to ease the sanctions.

Iraq's ambassador to the U.N., Nizar Hamdan, said Tuesday that most Security Council members supported a lifting of the embargo and described Ms. Albright's mission as "desperate."

"They can block any progress but I think it would be an embarrassment for the United States to use veto against the will of the majority of the council members," Ambassador Hamdan said.

Hamdan, speaking at a news conference, said several council members had told Iraqi officials privately they supported an end to the sanctions.

"If a secret vote took place, I am sure it would be a majority," Mr. Hamdan said, adding that "at least nine" of the 15 council members were in favour of a partial or total lifting of the sanctions.

Russia, France and China are advocating an easing of the oil embargo in the upcoming months if a U.N. report on Iraqi disarmament indicates that progress has been made.

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NPT push runs into U.S. pressure

NICOSIA (AFP) — Arab states are running up against the diplomatic clout of the United States in their campaign to force Israel to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher starts a new Middle East tour next week partly aimed at nudging the Arabs into signing an indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT at an April-May U.N. conference in New York.

The European Union (EU) and Russia back the U.S. stand.

One of Mr. Christopher's stops is Egypt, a U.S. ally which is spearheading a threat not to renew membership of the NPT indefinitely if Israel — considered the region's undeclared atomic giant — refuses to sign on.

Washington provides Cairo with around \$2 billion in annual aid.

Backing Egypt so far are the Gulf states of Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain as well as Syria, Lebanon, Sudan and Iraq. Baghdad's advanced nuclear weapons programme was reported destroyed and dismantled since the 1991 Gulf war.

Financial power Saudi Arabia, another major U.S. ally which Mr. Christopher plans to visit, said it will not take a stand until an Arab conference later this month. But the editor of the Cairo magazine Mawsar who is close to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was sceptical about how successful the campaign will be.

"All the indications are that the United States will pressure a number of Arab countries to ensure the quorum necessary for an indefinite extension of the NPT," Makram Mohammad Ahmad said.

Washington will try to block a joint Arab stand because it would "not please the Israelis who determine all American decisions concerning the Middle East," Mr. Ahmad added in this week's edition.

Israel, which is angry at its Egyptian partner in peace for taking such a tough stand, is adamant it cannot sign the NPT because it is the only state in the region whose very existence is threatened.

The Jewish state opposes international control over a nuclear arsenal reported to include some 200 warheads.

However, newspaper reports said last week Israel was for the first time considering joining the NPT two years after a global peace settlement in the region including Iran.

Egypt's final position will not be announced until the April 17 to May 12 conference when the 170 states which signed the NPT for 25 years in 1970 will vote an indefinite extension or a limited renewal for five, 10, 15 or 25 years.

Whether Cairo votes for or against it, the treaty would still apply to Egypt unless it formally suspends its membership — a step which Arab diplomats said would be unlikely. Egyptian officials mean-

while have given up hope they can influence the outcome of the conference and have sought instead to push for three kinds of guarantees from Israel, Arab diplomats said.

Cairo wants Israel to sign a formal declaration of intent to set a date for joining the NPT in the future, open facilities to international or Egyptian inspection, and pledge to join negotiations on drafting a treaty to eliminate weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East.

Iran, unlike Egypt and the Arab countries, has not linked its position to that of Israel although it has raised the problem of the Jewish state to justify its demands: equal rules for everyone, access to civilian nuclear technology, and guarantees of security from nuclear powers.

Tehran is hoping for a limited renewal of the treaty but has said it was ready to sign the NPT without conditions.

Mexico, Indonesia, and Nigeria have also expressed doubts about the NPT, and Egypt has been in diplomatic contact with them, an Egyptian official said.

But the head of the U.S. delegation on the NPT, Thomas Graham, said on Jan. 28 he was convinced a "significant majority" would support an indefinite extension of the NPT, having counted already more than 60 firm commitments.

Lynn Davis, the U.S. undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, told reporters Tuesday Washington was on

Israel's side on this issue.

"We are impressing upon Egypt our desire to have them support an indefinite extension of that treaty," she said. "We very much hope that at the end of the day the Egyptians can join us."

In theory the U.S. goal is for the NPT to be extended to all countries in the region to make the Middle East a nuclear-free zone, including Israel, Ms. Davis said.

But she immediately added, "we're also very realistic, and we would not expect the Israelis to take steps inconsistent with how they see their security to day."

Earlier in the day in Cairo, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said his country wanted its nuclear row with Israel to figure on the agenda of Mr. Christopher's mission to the Middle East.

"Contacts are underway to deal with this crisis as well as the dangers threatening the peace process and the feeling of disappointment among the Palestinians," he told reporters.

Separately, the State Department announced that Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal would pay a two-day visit to Washington starting Thursday and including meetings with Mr. Christopher.

The prince also will meet with President Bill Clinton, said the source speaking privately.

His talks with Mr. Christopher should include the Mideast peace process and the renewing the NPT.



TALIBANS: Two Afghans of the militant Taliban movement stand at their Charashah base, 25 kilometers southeast of Kabul where nine Russian-made battle-tanks are parked.

The Taliban have reiterated their demand for the evacuation of the Afghan capital by troops loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani (AFP photo)

Marines find abandoned Somali orphans

MOGADISHU (R) — Few Somali seem to be weeping about the departure of foreign troops from their soil this week — but orphaned urchins Abdullah and Ahmad cried their eyes out.

Berly U.S. Marines: who came ashore to cover evacuating United Nations peacekeepers on Tuesday were at a loss about what to do with the young children who wailed and sobbed when Pakistani soldiers who took care of them for months left.

"The Pakistanis took care of them but now they have nowhere to go," said Sergeant Ron Turner.

The children were clearly terrified of the uniformed

American men wielding guns who seemed deeply touched by the boys' distress.

"I gave them some candy. I haven't got any left," said one soldier.

But the sympathy of the Marines seemed to symbolise efforts by the world to do good in a country where the people often appeared ungrateful — and where the crisis was too great for all the money and military might of the West to solve.

The Marines were able to discover through Somali translators that the two boys had no parents and came from weak clans that live far from Mogadishu, capital of a country which foreign in-

tervention failed to pull out of tribal anarchy.

If they were turfed out onto the streets, the tiny boys would join thousands of homeless children who lost their families in civil war and famine.

Somalis have a strong clan network which means those in need can always rely on relatives for help. But Abdullah and Ahmad told translators they had nobody they knew to go to.

The Marines asked Somali police, stationed at the seaport for advice, but the men lounging about in the shade said they should simply be thrown out.

When U.S. and Italian

marines troops abandon the beach-head bases as the last U.N. forces leave in the next couple of days, the boys could be left behind as mobs of gunmen move in to loot the empty foreign bases.

Sgt. Turner said he had tried to get in touch with an orphanage set up by U.S. Marines when they first landed in Mogadishu to end Somalia's famine in December 1992.

He said that the Somalia-run institution, known as the "Restore Hope Orphanage" after the mission in which thousands of U.S.-led troops arrived in a landmark humanitarian effort two years ago, had been closed down.

Indyk appeared as U.S. envoy to Israel

WASHINGTON (R) — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee Tuesday approved the nomination of Martin Indyk to be the first Jewish ambassador to Israel from the United States.

The committee acted by voice vote without debate sending Mr. Indyk's name to the full Senate for final action.

Mr. Indyk, 43, has been director of Near East and South Asian affairs on President Bill Clinton's National Security Council since 1993. He came to the United States in 1982 from Australia and became a naturalised U.S. citizen two years ago.

Until now, the State Department has felt that a Jewish ambassador to Israel might have a conflict of interest.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. travel curbs on Lebanon extended

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States extended for six months restrictions on travel to Lebanon which were imposed nine years ago for security reasons, a State Department official said. Secretary of State Warren Christopher signed the extension of the measures, which were first taken after a TWA jetliner was hijacked to Beirut in 1985, an official told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. The measures forbid U.S. nationals to travel to Lebanon and ban flights between Beirut and U.S. cities. They are reviewed every six months by the State Department. "We need concrete improvements," the official said, adding that Washington hopes a dialogue with Lebanese officials on the issue would continue. An official Lebanese delegation, including Lebanese security officials, were in Washington in February to try to persuade the U.S. administration to ease up on the measures, as did an economic delegation. Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouze said afterwards he expected a gradual lifting of the U.S. restrictions.

17 'collaborators' to be tried by PNA court

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) state security court will next month try 17 Gazans accused of killing a teacher and six guerrillas on orders from Israel. PNA Justice Minister Freih Abu Midein told Al Nahar daily newspaper that the 17 were suspected of collaborating with Israel since the September 1993 autonomy agreement. Several of them would be charged with the murder of Hani Abed, an Islamic fundamentalist who taught science in Khan Yunes. He died in a car bomb on Nov. 2 which the authorities blamed on Israeli agents. Others among the group would be accused of murdering six members of the Hawks, the armed wing of Fatah, Mr. Abu Midein said. Yasser Arafat set up the military court last month despite criticism from human rights groups. There will be no appeal against sentences which Mr. Arafat himself must approve.

Cyprus quake damage put at around \$5 million

NICOSIA (AFP) — An earthquake that killed two people in Cyprus last week caused two to three million Cypriot pounds (four to six million dollars) worth of damage, the government said Tuesday. Close to 700 homes were destroyed or damaged in 50 villages in the quake on Thursday which measured 5.2 on the Richter scale. Interior Minister Dinos Michaelides said. The government will immediately rebuild 76 demolished homes and plans to cover the cost of damages in full, the minister said. The worst of the damage took place in the Paphos area on the west of the island, where an elderly couple were killed and six people were injured. Seismology officials in Cyprus said weak aftershocks continued to hit the island on Tuesday.

Bushido wrestlers visit Jerusalem sites

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Far East met Mideast Tuesday when Japanese bushido wrestling champion Novohiko Takada knelt in prayer at a Holocaust museum and then visited the western wall. Takada is here along with 15 other wrestlers from the United States and Japan for a tournament Thursday in Tel Aviv. Rachel Goldblatt, a spokeswoman for the wrestlers, said it would be the first time bushido, a Japanese form of martial arts, would be performed professionally outside Japan. Takada, draped in a knee-length black leather coat, donned a cardboard skullcap at the wall. Surrounded by photographers, camera crew and fans, Takada wrote a short note in Japanese and placed it in a crevice in the ancient stone wall, in the manner of religious Jews. He shook hands with police and greeted Israelis with the Hebrew word "Shalom."

Algeria shows alleged presidential assassin

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian authorities showed the alleged assassin of President Mohammad Boudiaf on television late Tuesday to quash rumours he had been killed in the bloody crushing of a prison mutiny last week.

Lembarek Boumaraf, a junior army officer who had not been seen publicly since Boudiaf's assassination on June 29, 1992, was relaxed and smiling as he answered questions from an interviewer during a two-hour programme on the mutiny.

The revolt at the Serkadji prison in Algiers was put down last Wednesday by the security forces with the death of 96 inmates. Boumaraf said the mutineers had taken him from his cell, and he had subsequently been slightly wounded in the leg but was well.

Other detainees testified that Boumaraf had seemed to be on good terms with the rebellious prisoners. Some, who had been held hostage by the mutineers, said they had been injured by their captors and not by the security forces.

They said that a leader of the banned Islamic Salvation Front, Abdul Kader Hachani, had tried to act as a mediator between the rebels and the authorities to avoid a confrontation.

The Algiers prosecutor confirmed that Hashani and Abdul Hak Layada, a former leader of the other fundamentalist group at war with the Algerian government, the Armed Islamic Group, had met officials outside the prison gate and offered to mediate.

Meanwhile in London, Amnesty International added its voice to calls for an independent enquiry into the prison mutiny to determine the exact circumstances surrounding the carnage.

In a statement published in London, the human rights organisation called for the results of the enquiry and the names of those who died in the incident to be made public "as soon as possible."

Tour of Kabul is a lesson in survival skills

By Greg Myre
The Associated Press

When the fighting in Afghanistan ended, the government of the country was near the front line. The shooting stops, he runs a prosperous currency exchange shop out of a small shipping container.

Amanullah, like every Kabul resident, knows that to survive in this shattered city you have to be flexible. This rugged Asian nation has been at war for 16 years and its citizens people have learned to cope, and in a few instances thrive, under the most extraordinary circumstances.

Kabul, once a lively city of bustling markets, has been ravaged by the Islamic militias that have battled for power since ousting a communist government in 1992.

There has not been electricity, or running water for almost two years. The

nominal government does not function, schools are rare and there is no formal economy.

None of this stops the enterprising Afghans, who are legendary for their survival skills.

When the money-changing market was wiped out by heavy battles along the Kabul River last year, the industry quickly reemerged in the less volatile western side of town as dozens of operators set up shop in shipping containers.

Amanullah, a husky, bearded man who wears a camouflage jacket and a bandolier of bullets, keeps in contact with his troops across town via walkie-talkie.

"People have had a bad life the past few years," said Amanullah from the comfort of his office, warmed by a stove. "What we all want now is peace and security."

Piled on a nearby chair were about 50 separate stacks of Afghan money,

each as thick as a brick and each one worth the equivalent of \$1,000. As the business day closed, Amanullah's assistant piled the cash into a suitcase for safekeeping at home.

On Chicken Street, a shopping district catering to rich Afghans and the city's handful of foreigners, shop owners take orders for whiskey, vodka and beer — all illegal in the Islamic state — and deliver to your home.

The government has tried to crack down on drug dealers selling hashish and gun sellers offering a wide array of weapons. But the officials are always a step behind the businessmen, who never seem to lack for supplies or customers.

In a city with few schools, boys become breadwinners at an early age. Boys no older than 10 often tug at your elbow to offer cigarettes. Others fill in potholes with dirt and try to flag down passing motorists

for a tip.

There are so many grease-stained kids working at Syed Rahman's car repair shop that it could be mistaken for an orphanage.

Mohammad Hamid, who looks younger than his 14 years, has in fact lost his parents to the war and he supports his three younger brothers on his monthly salary of 12,000 Afghanis, the equivalent of \$5.

"It's not enough for all us, but we sometimes get free food, too," said Mohammad, who was busy repairing the front wheel of a taxi.

With so many people living at the margin, precious little is wasted. Cans of old tins are hauled to a shop where they are made into shoes. Phone and electrical lines have been torn down for the copper, which can be resold.

One man was seen hacking apart rockets — before they had been fired — to sell as scrap metal.

Kabul has seen only spor-

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO

13:30 ... Animated Clases-Sinbad
15:00 ... Feature film: "Herbie Goes to Monte Carlo"
15:30 ... Football match: FC Barcelona vs. FC Bayern Munchen
17:00 ... News in English
17:30 ... News in French
18:30 ... Road to Avonlea
19:45 ... The Blue Revolution
20:30 ... News in English
22:00 ... Feature film: "Shirley Bases in Concert"
23:10 ... Bang'Lo: Hilton

PRAYER TIMES

04:41 ... Fajr
05:28 ... (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:48 ... Dhuhur
15:05 ... 'Asr
15:35 ... Maghreb
15:55 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627855

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Teresianum Church Tel. 623446
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Elizabeth Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
On Thursday, clouds are expected to appear at different altitudes with a chance of showers particularly in the southern and eastern regions of the Kingdom. On Friday, warm

weather conditions are expected to prevail with skies partly cloudy and winds southeasterly moderate. On Saturday, temperatures are expected to rise slightly with winds southeasterly moderate.

Min/Max. temp.
Amman 7 / 15
Aqaba 11 / 22
Deserts 9 / 18
Jordan Valley 10 / 21

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 17, Aqaba 23, Humidity readings: Amman 47 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Ghazi Abdullah 884286
Dr. Yousef Sammour 653254
Dr. Nidal As'ad 751672
Dr. Khalid M'addi 743500
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 783336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 623672
Al Salan pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 646945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Ali Al Omari 272032
Alquds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Yahya Tarif 981520
Khalil pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES
Food Control Centre 637111
Fire Brigade 617101
Civil Defence Department 75121
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Blood Bank 617101
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630221
Hotel Complaints 603900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Yacoub pharmacy 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-52200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/e
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mallab, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 664117/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 848845
Al-Mustashir Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajireen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marfa 891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital 602249/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital 674155
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)900560
Green Chahid Hospital (09)980732
IBRD:
Princess Pasha Hospital (02)75555
Green Chahid Hospital (02)72275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)347100

ACABAS
Princess Naja Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
04:00 ... Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
05:00 ... Aden (RJ)
07:00 ... Amman (RJ)
09:15 ... Agaba (RJ)
09:15 ... Riyadh (RJ)
09:40 ... New Delhi (RJ)
10:25 ... Beirut (RJ)
10:35 ... Colombo (RJ)
13:05 ... Hurgada (RJ)
17:00 ... New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:25 ... Cairo, Agaba (RJ)
19:00 ... London, Berlin (RJ)
19:05 ... Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
19:05 ... Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
19:10 ... Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
20:00 ... Rome (RJ)
20:30 ... Athens, Larnaca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
10:00 ... Muscat, Doha (GF)
12:20 ... Riyadh (SV)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:45 ... Beirut (RJ)
07:00 ... Agaba (RJ)
10:00 ... Hurgada (RJ)
10:40 ... Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
10:45 ... Amsterdam, Toronto (RJ)
11:00 ... Montreal, Chicago (RJ)
11:00 ... Rome (RJ)
11:55 ... Paris (RJ)
13:00 ... London (RJ)
12:45 ... Larnaca, Athens (RJ)
19:45 ... Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30 ... Jeddah (RJ)
21:25 ... Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:10 ... Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700 / 500
Banana (Mukannas) 680
Cabbage 120 / 80
Carrot 160/80
Cauliflower 140 / 80
Cucumbers (small) 100 / 50
Cucumbers (large) 250 / 160
Eggplant 160 / 80
Garlic 1200/800
Green beans 330 / 220
Lemon 90 / 50
Marrow (large) 220 / 140
Marrow (small) 360 / 240
Onion (green) 280 / 100
Onion (dry) 360 / 240
Spinach 450/350
Orange 800 / 450
Peas 720 / 460
Pepper (hot) 370 / 240
Pepper (sweet) 330 / 220
Potato 120 / 80
Radish 120 / 80
Spirinch 140 / 60
String Beans 700 / 400
Tomato 180/90

21:00 ... Cairo (MS)
02:20 ... Amsterdam (KL)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:30 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday



The Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday chairs a meeting of Islamic leaders (Petra photo)

Crown Prince urges preachers to promote guidance of youth

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday urged the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and its appointed mosque preachers to pay particular attention to teaching youth and deepening their faith.

Addressing the first meeting by the councils and committees of the various ministry departments, the Crown Prince suggested the creation of a task force to include young Muslims to help spread the message of the mosque.

He told the audience gathered at the Islamic Cultural Centre at the King Abdul Aziz Mosque in Amman that the message of the mosque should be based on a univer-

sal Islamic perspective, and that scholars and religious leaders should pool their resources in helping the youth understand and deal with the developments of the modern age.

Prince Hassan also called on the ministry to help organize meetings with Muslim scholars from other nations, to seek a twinning of Jordanian mosques with other mosques in the Arab and Islamic worlds, and to promote and highlight Jordan's call for the creation of an international Zakat fund to help the poor in the Muslim world.

At the outset of the meeting, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi reviewed ministry

plans for improving the departments' various functions and the execution of plans set by the ministry to upgrade preaching and other services to the public.

Among topics discussed at the meeting were: the mosque's mission, the Friday sermons, schools for teaching the Holy Koran, iftaa, Islamic publications, Sharia teaching, the Zakat fund, and issues related to Haj (pilgrimage to Mecca).

Present at the meeting were: Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi, Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzaq Ensour, Prince Hassan's advisor, Mohammad Saqaf, and other officials.

Israeli envoy-designate makes quick Amman visit — embassy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Israeli ambassador-designate to Jordan, Shimon Shamir, paid a few-hour visit to Amman on Wednesday and held talks with officials at the Israeli embassy and drove around the capital, an Israeli embassy spokeswoman said.

The spokeswoman said it was "premature" to discuss anything about Mr. Shamir's plans since his nomination as Israel's first ambassador to Jordan had yet to be confirmed by the Israeli cabinet. "The ambassador-designate was here on a private visit that lasted a few hours, and there was nothing official about the visit," said the spokeswoman, adding that no Jordanian officials had met Mr. Shamir.

Other reports suggested that Mr. Shamir might have been here for "orientation" ahead of a possible appearance before the Israeli cabinet prior to his appointment, although such an en-

counter is not obligatory. He was also believed to be looking for a possible residence in Amman.

Foreign ministry officials said the Jordanian government had not received any official notification of Mr. Shamir's nomination. In any event, such a notification, which would seek Jordanian approval of the nomination, could come only after the Israeli government itself approves it.

The officials, who preferred not to be identified, said they did not expect any problems with Jordan approving Mr. Shamir, an academician and expert on Middle East affairs.

His possible nomination as ambassador to Jordan was a compromise between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres who favoured rival candidates, according to reports in the Israeli press.

The Israeli foreign ministry finalized Mr. Shamir as ambassador two weeks ago, but the cabinet has not taken up the issue yet.

In the meantime, Marwan Muasher, Jordan's ambassador-designate to Israel, was sworn in early this week in the presence of His Majesty King Hussein.

Dr. Muasher, who served as head of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington and then as spokesman for the King's peace negotiators with Israel, is expected to leave for Tel Aviv after the Eid holidays.

Israel and Jordan opened embassies in Amman and Tel Aviv respectively in December, but both the facilities are operating out of hotels pending the location of suitable premises.

The Jordanian embassy in Tel Aviv, as and when fully functional from proper premises, is expected to have up to seven diplomats supported by administrative staff, local reports said.

'Cabinet decision to raise pensions in line with King's directives'

AMMAN (Petra) — A Cabinet decision issued Tuesday evening raising the pension of retired civil and military personnel whose services were terminated before December 1994 came in implementation of His Majesty King Hussein's directives in recognition of their vital services to the nation over the past years, Minister of Information Khaled Karaki said Wednesday.

Dr. Karaki said the increases, ranging between JD7 and JD23 a month, would raise the retired servicemen's and civil personnel's pensions to the same level of those who retired before December 1, 1994.

He said, however, that since the increases amount to a JD36 million — something for which there was no allocation in the 1995 fiscal budget — the Council of Ministers decided to spread the increases gradually over the next three years ending May 1, 1997 when all retired personnel from the civil service and military would be receiving the same amount of pension regardless of the date of their retirement.

Finance Minister Basel Jarad said in a statement earlier that the measures are designed to remove differences in the amount of pension received by earlier and new pensioners.

He said the total number of retired personnel — civil and military — who would benefit from the plan is 160,175.

The plan was submitted to King Hussein at a Cabinet meeting held Tuesday evening.

The King voiced appreciation of the government's efforts to come to the aid of military and civilian personnel who had offered vital services to the nation over the years and to the families of martyrs.

King Hussein directed the government to speed up study on other laws and regulations which are needed to cater to the requirements of the current stage of constructing the country's institutions and achieving overall development.

The King listened to a detailed briefing by the prime minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker about the government's programmes aimed at

implementing its policy statement as presented to parliament and in implementation of royal directives to the government.

The Cabinet said that Jordan would attend the 103rd Arab League Council session due to be held on March 22 in Cairo, and said that the Jordanian delegation will be led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdul Karim Kabariti.

The Cabinet also formed Jordan's delegation to attend an international conference on investment opportunities in tourism and hotel sectors in Arab countries to be held in Damascus on March 12. Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Abdul Ilah Al Khatib will head Jordan's delegation to that meeting.

The Cabinet also formed Jordan's delegation to a meeting by the Arab Satellite Communications Organisation meeting to be held in the United Arab Emirates on March 27, and another delegation to attend the 11th meeting of the International Labour Organisation's committee on chemical industries

to be held in Geneva in May. Also Wednesday the Cabinet announced its approval of recommendations submitted by a ministerial committee set up to study the fate of workers at the defunct Jordan Glass Industries Company (JGICO) which had suspended operations as of Dec. 31, 1993 due to heavy losses.

According to a statement from the Cabinet, the company's estimated 300 workers will be absorbed by government departments and public shareholding companies and given new jobs.

The statement said that all the company workers will receive a 13th month salary for last year and that care would be taken towards appointing these workers in establishments as close as possible to their present place of residence.

According to the statement, 131 workers will be given jobs in shareholding companies and 103 in government departments, while the rest will later be found jobs in accordance with their skills and experience.

The Council of Ministers had entrusted the ministerial committee on Feb. 11 to undertake a full study of the company's affairs and come up with recommendations.

The company, which was established in 1974 near Maan with a JD1 million capital, started production in 1984, and its capital was raised to JD9 million in 1987.

It suffered losses of more than 75 per cent of its capital mainly as a result of obsolete technology and production methods, according to experts.

The main problem was the below-standard quality of sheet glass produced by the company's factory causing the company to run into serious troubles over the past few years.

Experts said that the company's assets are estimated between \$35 million and \$40 million.

Several proposals submitted to the Ministry of Industry and Trade about modernising the plant are still pending, and the Cabinet statement made no mention of any plans in this respect.

Premier inaugurates QAIA link bridge

AMMAN (J.T.) — The new bridge linking the Abdoun area with the Queen Alia International Airport highway and the Seventh Circle in Amman was formally inaugurated Wednesday by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker at a ceremony attended by Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi and other officials.

The bridge was to have been opened for traffic three weeks ago, but work was delayed temporarily following the collapse of part of the construction on Jan. 3, in which workers were injured.

According to Amman Municipality sources, the bridge, which cost JD400,000, is linked to a one-kilometre-long stretch of

road connecting the industrial zone of Wadi Seer with the Abdoun district, and is considered of important to helping motorists avoid the usually congested road leading to the Seventh and Eighth circles.

The prime minister and the mayor toured the area and was told that the total cost of the construction was borne by the municipality which also financed the construction of traffic lights, street shoulders.

Dr. Abbadi said that the municipality worked around the clock against the odds of shorter working hours during Ramadan and cold nights to finish the job and present the completed bridge to the public as a gift on 'Eid Al-Fitr.



Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and attend the inauguration of the QAIA link Amman Mayor Mamdouh Abbadi Wednesday bridge (Petra photo)

JPA board member resigns in protest over 'cooperation in curtailing press'

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The government closure of two weekly newspapers has led to the resignation of Jordan Press Association's (JPA) board member Musa Hawamdeh in protest against what he terms as the association's cooperation with the Minister of Information to curtail press freedoms.

"The association has been transformed into another department of the Ministry of Information," Mr. Hawamdeh charged Wednesday in an interview with the Jordan Times. "It is being used as the means to muzzle all voices that oppose the government."

In his resignation that he submitted to the JPA Tuesday Mr. Hawamdeh, a senior journalist with Al Dustour daily, said the key reason behind it was his failure to achieve any of the objectives he was elected for.

"The association is in very bad shape," he said. "If we aren't able to come up with a really good association that would defend and protect journalists' rights, then journalism as a whole would not be improved."

Mr. Hawamdeh, an au-

thor of several booklets and former columnist at Sawt Al Shaab and Al Dustour, accused the Press and Publications Department (PPD) of targeting writers and opposition papers.

Mr. Hawamdeh said the Press and Publications Department was only tolerant of "the same old type of monotonous journalism. It cannot tolerate serious and professional journalism."

In a letter sent on Sunday to the two tabloids Al Bilad and Hawadeth Al Sa'ah — a copy of which also sent to Al Dustour publishing house where the two papers are regularly printed — the director of the Press and Publications Department, Mohammad Amin, called on the two periodicals to stop their publication until their status is rectified in accordance with the law.

He told the Jordan Times that the chief editors of the two weeklies could not be considered as full members of the JPA since they have not been sworn in.

On Monday, Mr. Amin sued Al Majd weekly for publishing a riddle that is considered offensive to the president of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan. The riddle, printed in Monday's paper, asked readers to identify an

imaginary animal "with one eye, one ear, lives in the wilderness, eats honey and stings like a bee. The creature is homosexual, hates women and is short-sighted."

Al Majd printed the riddle under a headline identifying the author as Sheikh Al Nahayan. It said the riddle seems to be written by Sheikh Zayed but "distributed by his enemies." The weekly readers should send answers to the royal palace in the UAE capital, Abu Dhabi, to qualify for a prize of one million UAE dirhams.

Mr. Amin said Al Majd violated Article 40 of the Press and Publication Law. The article bans all publications from publishing articles or information that would slander the personality of presidents of Arab countries, Islamic or friendly countries or heads and members of diplomatic missions.

The chief editor of Al Majd, Fahd Rimawi, said the article altogether with all its clauses should be cancelled.

"There is no such article in any press and publication law all over the world," Mr. Rimawi said. "In a couple of months they would sue us if we

utter a word against Israel."

Mr. Rimawi accused the government of attempting to wipe out all weekly opposition newspapers by using a "law that is filled with gaps."

"There is no democracy anymore," he said. "Democracy can't survive in such an environment." JPA President Saleman Qudrah rejected all accusations against the association and said the association would stand by Al Majd in court but had nothing to do with the closing down of Al Bilad and Hawadeth Al Sa'ah.

"Can one consider Hawadeth Al Sa'ah as an opposition newspaper?" Mr. Qudrah asked. "We were asked by the PPD if the newly-appointed chief editors were JPA members or not, and we said membership could not be complete unless they took the oath."

Hilmi Al Asmar, a JPA board member, said he opposed the closure of any newspaper but that "things have gone out of hand." "It is a very complicated issue," Mr. Asmar, chief editor of the Islamist weekly Al Sabeel, said. "The publication of sensational news ... we have employed

all means but nothing seems to work out."

Al Bilad, Hawadeth Al Sa'ah and Shihnan have come under criticism from the JPA because they were "overstating facts and publishing material that infringe upon the general ethics." The JPA cited Article 40-a-9 that bans the publication of any news, reports, letters and photos that are in contradiction with the general ethics and moral standards.

In a memo sent last month to the three weeklies, the JPA threatened to refer them to a disciplinary council if they did not stop publishing "fabricated news, obscene photos and inaccurate news."

"It is not a story of publishing obscene photos or fabricated crimes," Mr. Hawamdeh charged. "They are targeting opposition papers because they publish true and real information that has never been published before and that influences decision-makers."

"But our values are different from those in European countries," Yasser Abu Hilaleh, managing editor of Al Sabeel, said. "We have constants and fixed principles that cannot be changed."



Holiday shoppers in downtown Amman (photo by Rana Hussein)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

March 5, at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Jordan River Designs (a Save The Children Project) featuring hand embroidered, home furnishing, and fashion accessories during the Eid holiday (Tel. 628760).
- ★ "Young America" exhibit (with photographs featuring Americans of all ages) at the American Centre.

LECTURE

Lecture (in Arabic) entitled "The Current Crisis of the Oslo Accord: Causes and Horizons" by Mr. Nabli 'Amr, Fatah Revolutionary Council member, at Abd al-Razzaq Shaban Foundation on Sunday,

By Cathy King
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Recent reports in the Arabic press told of the liquidation of the Jordan Radio, Television and Cinema Production Company which were closely followed by a denial issued by its board of directors chairman, Fahed Fanek, stating that the company was in fact progressing well.

"There is no reality whatsoever" in the reports of liquidation, "the company is operating and has rented its studios to JTV (Jordan Television) for two months, and Shaikh Saleh Kamel for another two," Dr. Fanek told

the Jordan Times Wednesday. Al-Intaj, the shortened Arabic name for the production company, almost met financial ruin last autumn.

Established in 1983, the company over expended its original capital of JD 5 million (\$15 million in 1983) by a further JD 5 to 5.5 million to build two state-of-the-art studios and purchase equipment.

The expense incurred soft loans from foreign banks which became increasingly hard to repay as production dropped off. Former Al-Intaj General Manager Jawad Maragheh blamed decreased production upon the trend towards outdoor shooting and the loss of the company's

best market: the Gulf states. The Gulf crisis of 1990-1991 led to a strain in relations between Jordan and the Gulf countries.

In a bid to stem its insolvency a management committee, appointed last July, decided upon leasing the studios.

In late September the lease was awarded to Saudi businessman and Rome-based Arab Radio and Television (ART) owner Shaikh Saleh Kamel. Despite the management committee's approval of Shaikh Saleh's offer of \$500,000 annually for four years, the lease has not yet been activated.

Mr. Maragheh resigned from his position as general manager

last November, and in mid-December the trouble-shooting management committee was replaced by a board of directors.

The board and its chairman, Dr. Fanek, were elected by the company's general assembly. Although the terms of the lease have not been concluded, said Dr. Fanek, Al-Intaj has made short-term agreements with JTV and ART to rent them the use of the studios and equipment.

The government and government-guided agencies own between them 85 per cent of the company's shares. Therefore, regarding the bank loans he said: "The loans are guaranteed by Jordan Invest-

ment Corporation and are the liability of the Ministry of Finance."

"We do not have to worry about the loans. We worry about the day-to-day affairs, and currently the company is doing well and is liquid," he added.

"In fact, we are having second thoughts about a long-term lease because the (production) climate is more favourable," said Dr. Fanek, adding that the company is awaiting the arrival of a new general manager.

The position has been offered to Zaid Fariz of JTV, but his reply of acceptance or refusal is still awaited.

إهداء من الأردن

North Korean president calls for North to stop hostility

Koreans pay tribute to Marshal

Pyongyang (AP) — North Korean President Kim Jong-il called for the North to stop hostility against the South and pay tribute to Marshal Kim Il-sung, the country's founder, on the anniversary of his death.

Kim Jong-il said in a speech to the Supreme People's Assembly that the North must now strive for unification.

On March 1, 1919, thousands of Koreans took to the streets to declare independence from Japan. Hundreds were injured and taken prisoner. Dozens were killed.

Schools were closed as a result, and many fled to China and the United States to escape persecution. March 1 is a national holiday in South Korea.

Relations between North and South Korea are still frosty, but government-level talks on improving ties have been suspended since 1993.

With no peace treaty signed, the two sides remain technically at war, with nearly 2 million troops facing off across the demilitarized zone, the world's most heavily armed border.

Recent attempts at restarting talks have been fruitless, with both sides suggesting meetings only to have the other side reject each offer.

North-South dialogue was supposed to occur with the implementation of a nuclear deal between Pyongyang and Washington.

Meanwhile, North Korean Wednesday bid a final farewell to Defence Minister O Jin-U, number two in the Communist state's hierarchy, who died of lung cancer Saturday at 78.

The official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), monitored in Tokyo, said Kim Jong-il attended a solemn state funeral for Marshal O, a rare public appearance by the isolated country's shadowy leader.

"The great leader of our party and our people, Comrade Kim Jong-il, chairman of the National Defence Commission of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and supreme commander of the Korean People's Army, was present at the funeral," KCNA said in a dispatch from Pyongyang.

"Comrade Kim Jong-il together with senior party and state officials paid a moment's silent tribute to the memory of O Jin-U," the agency said.

Marshal O's death compounds the mystery over developments in the corridors of power of the secretive state, which continues to recover from the shock of losing founder Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il's father, last July.

Radio Pyongyang had said Kim Jong-il would head the 240-member funeral committee, which included senior party and state officials.

Prime Minister Kang Song-San, previously ranked third in the country's hierarchy, was named just behind Kim Jong-il in the list of funeral committee members, meaning that Mr. Kang had virtually inherited the number two position from Marshal O.

"I don't think there will be major changes in the hierarchy until Kim Jong-il formally assumes top positions in the North," said Choi Sang-Chol, an analyst at the Unification Ministry in Seoul.

The junior Kim has been hailed by North Korean media as his father's successor but has yet to be elevated to the key posts held by his father — state president and general secretary of the all-powerful Communist Party.

KCNA said Marshal O was buried in the Revolutionary Martyrs Cemetery on Mount Taesong in Pyongyang.

"A bust of O Jin-U was set up in the cemetery," it added.

Before the funeral, North Koreans paid tribute to the late defence minister in Pyongyang.

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Ecuadorian President Duran Ballen shows on a map the disputed border area between Peru and Ecuador during a press conference in Montevideo. Mr. Duran Ballen was in Montevideo to attend the inauguration of Uruguay's President-elect Julio Maria Sanguinetti (AFP photo).

Ecuador, Peru agree to abide by truce

MONTevideo (AFP) — Ecuador and Peru have agreed to halt their month-long border war and abide by their Feb. 17 ceasefire pact, during a four-hour meeting with international mediators in Montevideo.

The "Declaration of Montevideo" was signed at midnight Tuesday (0300 GMT Wednesday) by Foreign Ministers Galeo Lora of Ecuador, Efraim Goldenberg of Peru, Guido Di Tella of Argentina, Luiz Lampraia of Brazil and Jose Miguel Insulza of Chile.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, Alexander Watson, also signed the agreement. Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States, who guaranteed a flawed, 1942 border treaty between the two countries, have stepped in as mediators since the latest fighting began on Jan. 26.

The ministerial meeting here was convened last week by Ecuador after it became clear that neither country was complying with the ceasefire agreement that was signed in Brasilia last month.

The four-point Declaration of Montevideo calls for an immediate ceasefire in the disputed border area along the Andes Cordillera Range, and for both sides to withdraw their troops to previously designated areas — Coan-

gos in Ecuador and PVI in Peru.

"It was a positive meeting... we have witnessed in Ecuador and Peru a genuine willingness to begin a peace process with a total affirmation of an immediate ceasefire," Mr. Lampraia told reporters after the agreement was signed.

The Brazilian minister cautioned, however, that the agreement was "only an initial step" towards negotiations to settle the Ecuador-Peru border dispute once and for all.

"We will reach that stage after the (border) area has been demilitarised," Mr. Lampraia said, adding that the guarantor countries of the 1942 Protocol of Rio de Janeiro would send military observers "immediately" to 78-kilometre (48-mile) stretch of Amazon jungle claimed by both countries.

Mr. Lampraia said finding a lasting settlement to the border dispute between Ecuador and Peru was vital, "otherwise this military crisis will be repeated over and over again."

Border clashes have been frequent since Ecuador in 1960 withdrew from the Rio Protocol, which failed to properly demarcate the area in the rugged jungle area at the head of the Cenepa River.

Mr. Guido Di Tella said he felt confidence the latest heavy columns and porticos, reflecting their former alliance with Hitler.

At present they house an Italian consulate and a German-Japanese cultural institute respectively.

Other countries, which sold their Berlin sites during the cold war and set up in Bonn instead, are negotiating their repurchase with federal or city authorities here.

The municipality has launched an embassy fund to help countries look for sites, promising a 25 per cent reduction on the price of land bought before the middle of this year.

With 1998 still some way off, and the considerable investment a new embassy requires, many of the smaller countries are still hesitating. But the suggestion that developing nations remain in Bonn, which will still be the home of Germany's Foreign Aid Ministry, has had a mixed response.

"It would be perceived as degrading, with first-class ambassadors living in Berlin and second-class ones in Bonn," commented Martin Loer, deputy director for protocol in the Berlin regional government.

Mr. Noonan's bill lays down narrow guidelines for disseminating abortion information. It would allow Irish newspapers, magazines and broadcast media to advertise English family-planning clinics, but only if the ads do "not advocate or promote abortion."

Advertising on billboards, via leaflets or by other public means would remain illegal and be punishable by fines.

British newspapers and international magazines such as Cosmopolitan long have had their classified sections purged of abortion clinic ads before distribution in the Irish Republic.

Most lawmakers hope this measure will remove abortion from Ireland's political landscape. They may get their wish.

The Irish Times of Dublin jibed in an editorial: "As a society we are content, it seems, to continue to export this problem to England, while congratulating ourselves that we have banished the troublesome business from our state."

ceasefire would be binding. "It was clear during the meeting that Ecuador and Peru had decided to stop the fighting."

"We (the guarantor countries) have been relentless in our effort and it looks like this time we were convincing. But let us wait and see what happens," the Argentine minister said.

The casualty toll from the border war has left many more troops dead than either government has acknowledged, according to the Uruguay-based Latin American Association of Human Rights.

Ecuador has acknowledged the deaths of 27 troops, 77 injured and 10 disappeared. Peru has announced 38 deaths, 60 injured and 10 missing soldiers.

Bomb hurled at U.S. embassy in Lima

Meanwhile suspected rebels hurled a bomb outside the U.S. embassy here late Tuesday, shattering some windows, and tossed two other bombs at police stations, injured seven passerby, police said.

There were no injuries reported in the blast at the U.S. embassy, which also damaged some nearby store fronts. The bomb was hurled from a passing car, police said.

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Mardi Gras downpour fails to dampen festivities

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana (AFP) — Torrential rains failed to dampen the annual Mardi Gras saturnal here Tuesday as revelers hit the streets for the pre-Lenten festival of costume parades, mass quantities of drink and wild acts. Rains pounded the streets, soaked parade floats and generally made life miserable except for those who administered generous portions of the legal form of general anesthesia — alcohol.

"The only bad thing is it waters down my beer," said Ron Edmund, 38, of Chicago. Each year thousands of tourists descend upon the quaint French colonial quarter of this southern city to celebrate Mardi Gras, the French term for Fat Tuesday, which comes the day before Ash Wednesday when Lent begins. Estimates placed the number of tourists in the city at 300,000, but the wet weather kept a good portion of the 1.2 million festivalgoers indoors.

For Ada Langford, 31, of Boston, the rain was only somewhat of a nuisance. "I think I should get extra to pull up my blouse in this stuff," she said. Parade watchers standing on balconies overlooking the march area throw cheap beads to the people below in an effort to encourage them to expose themselves.

Indian eunuchs tackle statue problem

CALCUTTA (AFP) — Thousands of Indian eunuchs have threatened to launch a campaign against a Communist-controlled state government if it fails to improve their lot, a leader of the community said Wednesday. The eunuchs, at a gathering in the state of West Bengal last week, accused the ruling Communists of ignoring the community and demanded a rehabilitation programme to better their social and economic status.

Sita Rani said, "The conference decided to launch an agitation (campaign) if the demand was not met," said Rani, who presided over the Feb. 26 meeting. Some 2,000 eunuchs from India attended the meeting at the village of Garbeta, nearly 200 kilometres (125 miles) from here. Calcutta is the capital of West Bengal, which has been ruled by Communists since 1977. "The West Bengal government is ignoring our plight," Rani said. Rani said there were some 20,000 eunuchs in West Bengal, out of half a million in the country. Rani said the Indian government recognised the eunuchs as beggars. "We should be treated as handicapped and given necessary facilities and allowances," Rani added. "The Election Commission has begun giving out identity cards for us. So why is the government not doing its bit?" "It is time we are treated as normal citizens, and accepted by society," Rani said. Indian eunuchs live on the margins of society and earn a living seeking alms during marriages and births. Rani said their income was declining because more and more people were having small families.

Maid 'bobbles' butler

COLOMBO (AFP) — A teenager girl employed as a domestic help agreed to have sex with a 60-year-old male servant to avoid being blackmailed but then sliced off his penis while they were in bed, police here said Tuesday. Simon decided to blackmail Jeeva a day after he found her in a compromising position with a painter, police said. Jeeva, 18, agreed to his demands but when the unsuspecting Simon got into the act Monday, the young girl lost no time in severing his penis with a fruit knife, police said. Simon was rushed to hospital but doctors said they had problems re-attaching his severed member. Jeeva has been taken into custody.

Bangladesh mail workers let cat out of the bag

DHAKA (AFP) — A lucky cat used up nearly all of its nine lives when it was accidentally bundled up in a mailbag and transported 40 kilometres (27 miles) in eastern Bangladesh, Janakantha newspaper reported Wednesday. The groggy moggy was released by postal workers after making its unorthodox trip in Chandpur district, it said. The cat is being nursed back to good health.

U.S. vows to keep peace in U.N.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said Tuesday the United States would keep the United Nations in peacekeeping, to keep us supporting an active role in the world. Mr. Clinton said during an exchange with reporters.

"I believe the American people understand that we're better off having these burdens shared with all the nations of the world," Mr. Clinton said.

"If we walk away as some suggest we should in our Congress, and don't spend money on the this, all we're going to do is make the world's problems worse," he said.

Army blamed for Timor killings

The Liquiza incident has also refocused world attention on East Timor which Indonesia invaded in 1975, a move never recognised by the United Nations.

The Human Rights Commission's findings were surprisingly tough given its official position, and directly contradicted investigations into the incident carried out by the powerful military.

While admitting troops deserted from procedures, the army insists two of the Timorese were guerrillas and the others sympathisers.

Human rights groups, East Timorese exiles and local residents have said all along the six were only villagers.

Since invading East Timor, Indonesia has faced dwindling guerrilla resistance and fledgling civil unrest.

Members of the year-old commission — which has been outspokenly critical on several key cases — returned to Jakarta from Dili Sunday after two investigations into the incident.

Murazki Darusman, a commission member, told the news conference it would present the findings of the probes to the government but he declined to give details.

In the aftermath of the incident, foreign journalists have been denied permits to visit East Timor.

The commission's report, which came earlier than the military's role in East Timor, when several senior officers were removed after the shooting of more than 50 East Timorese protesters in the capital Dili in November 1993.

A United Nations human rights investigator urged Indonesia Tuesday to reopen inquiries into that incident, which he described as the slaughter by troops of up to 250 civilians.

Presenting his report on the territory to the U.N. Human Rights Commission, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that "one of the most distressing aspects" of his inquiry was that nobody had yet been charged for the killings.

Simpson prosecution given tape of alibi witness

LOS ANGELES (R) — O.J. Simpson's defence team Tuesday gave prosecutors a tape of an interview with a key alibi witness who says she saw the American football legend's white vehicle outside his estate at the time he was alleged to be murdering his ex-wife and a friend.

Prosecutors have accused the defence of trying to "sandbag" their case by withholding the tape, made July 29, and even denying its existence.

In a separate development, transcripts released Tuesday of an in-chambers hearing between Judge Lance Ito and the attorneys indicated the judge might dismiss a juror Wednesday for misconduct.

The panel member is juror 620, a black man who reportedly made a bet with a colleague at work before being chosen for the panel that Simpson would be found not guilty.

The juror was also seen sporting a San Francisco 49ers lapel pin. The 49ers was the last team Simpson played for in his illustrious career as a running back.

Judge Ito told the attorneys he would deal with the "problem" of Juror 620 when the jury returns to court Wednesday.

After listening to the taped conversation between witness Rosa Lopez and defence investigator William Pavelic Tuesday, Deputy District Attorney Marcia Clark told Judge Ito she had never heard anything like it in her career.

"I have never heard a witness basically coached and told what to say through every bend and turn," she said. She said the audio tape, when compared to Ms. Lopez's testimony on the stand Monday, contained "many glaring inconsistencies."

Although Ms. Lopez testified to seeing Simpson's Ford Bronco on the night of the murders last June, there is no mention of the vehicle on the tape.

In addition, Ms. Clark said, Ms. Lopez talks on the tape about hearing a conversation between Simpson and another man at about 10 p.m. that night, but that fact was never brought out in her testimony.

Ms. Clark said that for once in her career she was at a loss for words. "I'm speechless," she said. The prosecution Monday called on Judge Ito to discipline Simpson's so-called "dream team" for concealing the tape.

Defence attorney Carl Douglas, who is in charge of exchange evidence with the prosecution under California's law of discovery, said Monday he was not aware of the tape.

Mr. Pavelic testified Tuesday it was only when he heard prosecution lawyer Christopher Darden's statement that he remembered having the tape and brought it to the attention of the defence.

Ms. Lopez had been due to take the stand for a third time Tuesday morning, but the judge and attorneys spent the morning having the tape copied.

Embassies prepare to return to Berlin

BERLIN (AFP) — Foreign embassies are slowly preparing to return to Berlin as the capital of a united Germany for the first time for 50 years or more.

Last week Britain became the first country to unveil its plan for a new mission, to be built on the site of its former embassy in the Wilhelmstrasse, the original diplomatic quarter conceived under Adolf Hitler's Third Reich.

Work is to begin at the end of 1996, some two years before more than 100 countries are due to move their diplomats from Bonn to Berlin in the wake of the German government.

In the same area by the Brandenburg Gate the French and U.S. embassies will also rise again in a rebuilt Pariser Platz, which after being destroyed in World War II then isolated in the no-man's land created by the Berlin Wall, is set to become the new capital's heart, complete with a new Adlon Hotel.

Washington invited submissions from architects a few months ago, while the French are winding up negotiations for a plot adjacent to the one they have possessed since 1860 to enable them to construct a bigger and more suitable mission.

When the French embassy was last in Berlin it had 45 diplomats. In Bonn at present Paris has 260 representatives, the head of the Berlin diplomatic team, Christian Conan, stressed.

"The architectural competition will be launched this year, and we will be ready for when the government arrives," Mr. Conan said.

Some countries already have embassies in the eastern part of the city, the former capital of East Berlin.

The Russians, for example, will stay in their mission on the prestigious avenue Unter Den Linden, but many others have buildings that are unsuitable, or only on a lease.

Greece plans to move back into its prewar building in the Wilhelmstrasse area, which is at present in ruins, with windows walled up and a pile of rubbish accumulating in front.

Italy and Japan can also move back into their former homes, which were already rebuilt before the fall of the Wall and retain their old fascist-style architecture of heavy columns and porticos, reflecting their former alliance with Hitler.

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Mardi Gras downpour fails to dampen festivities

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana (AFP) —

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Separation incurs costs

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin's decision to go ahead at full speed with his decision to separate Israelis from Palestinians found an added expression when Rabin told his cabinet a few days ago that there are already 59,000 foreign (non-Palestinian) workers and another 11,000 are expected to arrive soon to replace Palestinian labourers working in Israel. At the height of cooperation between the two sides there were no less than 120,000 Palestinians earning their livelihood within Israel. In the wake of last month's Beit Lid bombing, however, the number dwindled to about 15,000. No wonder living standards in the Gaza Strip dropped by 25 per cent in the last six months alone.

The main beneficiary of all these changes on the employment scene is of course Hamas and other anti-negotiations organisations operating in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The new economic hardships in the Palestinian territories have obviously compounded the longstanding economic woes of the Palestinian people and made the socio-economic climate favourable to more and greater violence.

Granted that the Palestinian dependence on Israel for either employment or commerce and trade has never been healthy or viable. But sooner or later this inter-dependence could not go on for ever anyway. The Palestinians can no longer claim a legitimate right to seek work and business opportunities within Israel since they are opting for independence. On the other hand, normal economic relations between the two sides would materialise only after Palestinian political rights have been satisfied.

The interim period is obviously the most painful since this is the time when economic pressures on the people need to ease.

Thus all parties which have a vested interest in the success of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are called upon to help in alleviating the terrible conditions that exist now. Israel has decided to transfer a small amount to the Palestinian side as an emergency grant to lessen the impact of its decision to wean itself away from dependence on Palestinian labour. Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid has proposed that his government give the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) \$333 million annually for this purpose. This would not be just Israeli charity but a token compensation to the Palestinians who have helped construct the Israeli economy for many years. There are other ideas floating in the area about establishing joint Israeli-Palestinian labour-intensive industries on their "frontiers." Whatever the panacea could be to this new negative development, more concerted efforts need to be made to stop and reverse the additional economic burdens on the Palestinian side so that peace between the two sides would have a chance to succeed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE AMERICANS are trying by all means to perpetuate the U.N. sanctions on Iraq, which has already implemented all U.N. Security Council resolutions, simply to satisfy U.S. selfish interests, said Ibrahim Al Absi, a writer in Al Ra'i daily. The U.S. administration is now claiming that Iraq possesses biological weapons and that it commits human rights abuses, which, in Washington's views, warrant the continuation of the embargo, said the writer. To back its views, the U.S. administration has sent out its U.N. ambassador around the world to convince governments of its views before the time comes for the Security Council to review the sanctions by mid-March, continued the writer. The United States, added the writer, is not satisfied with four years of sufferings inflicted on the Iraqi people, and not satisfied by Iraq's implementation of all U.N. resolutions, including the recognition of Kuwait's borders and sovereignty.

THE AMERICANS and the Israelis like to describe the coming tour in the Middle East region by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher as part of Washington's drive to give impetus to the peace process. But in reality, this process does not exist any more in light of Israel's actions, according to Taher Al Adwan in Al Dustour. To abort Mr. Christopher's mission before it begins, the Israelis resorted to maintaining a blockade on Lebanese ports and a siege on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, said the writer. In the face of the obstacles placed by Israel in the path of the peace process, the U.S. secretary of state is unlikely to achieve any success and could rather seek to freeze the peace process for the time-being until probably after the Israeli parliamentary elections, said the writer.

The View from Academiah

Formal traffic education: a task greatly neglected

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THERE IS no doubt that the formal traffic education that learners undergo, or ought to undergo, before they obtain the driver's license can make a difference when and if handled properly. The more effective the education is, I believe, the better the quality of motoring will be. As things stand at present, however, formal traffic education in our part of the world, a task which the private drivers' training centres are expected to carry out, is both greatly neglected and abused.

All persons wishing to obtain a driver's license are required to take formal lessons at any of the many private centres. The lessons are, or are supposed to be, both theoretical and practical. With respect to the former, learners are required to receive 10 hours of instruction about the various aspects of motoring and the road situation. Specialists at the said centres are to teach the learners the rules, regulations and laws of traffic, and they are to teach them in a way which compels the learners not only to "know" but to value what they learn. In addition to the 10 hours of theoretical instruction, there is, of course, the practical training. The purpose behind the latter is not only to teach learners how to start the engine, steer, shift, break and pull over but also to apply what they have studied during the 10 hours.

Unfortunately, very little of this actually materialises. A small minority of centres takes the theoretical part of the training seriously. Most centres either pay lip-service to the task or ignore it entirely. I have spoken with over 25 people who have recently gone through the process of obtaining the license. Five of them said they took one lesson only. They went to the centre, they said, were told to pay JD 10 (the fee for the theoretical training), were taken into a room for about 50 minutes during which a person came and talked to them about traffic rules, were then informed that they did not have to attend the rest of the lessons should they choose not to for they could teach themselves at their convenience. The other 20 told me they did not take any

theoretical lessons. They paid the JD 10 and started the practical training right away.

I understand perfectly the value and importance of self-learning and self-teaching. A person does not have to go to a centre to learn and learn to respect the regulations, rules and laws of traffic. All one has to do is to obtain the booklet, sit down and read. Easy and straightforward, right? Well, yes and no. Yes, when we feel confident that learners will in fact take this simple assignment to heart, will actually read, attempt to understand and value; and no, when we feel that they won't. In the case of individuals in our society, my guess is that most of them cannot be trusted to rely on themselves in this matter. While some are truly committed, most are too careless to devote enough time and effort. Generally, people in our society have not been trained either to rely on themselves or to take written material seriously. We are too reliant on teachers and instructors and oral discourse to read and learn effectively on our own. What happens is what has happened in the case of the 25 persons I have spoken to: they memorise the road signs and answers to questions in the written test, questions and answers they obtain from those who have taken the test.

But this is not what bothers me most here. The most upsetting thing about the centres' neglect of theoretical education has to do with the implications of their act. Not only are they breaching and violating a crucial trust and a crucial service and function, but they are abusing the learners and corruption them. What lessons are they teaching them when they take the JD 10 and "exempt" them from the learning? What values? What ethics? Are not they teaching them that rules, regulations and laws are to be simply disregarded and ignored? Is not this a subversive act on part of these centres? Is not this a destructive? Is not this a major cause of the bad traffic situation we are presently experiencing?

What happens on the road, when the learner embarks on the practical part of the training, is not any better. In the

vast majority of cases, the training is purely and entirely technical. This is good, of course. We do expect our future drivers to be in full control when they are behind the wheel. To know how to steer well, how to make a U-turn swiftly and skilfully, how to shift gears smoothly, etc. And to tell the truth, most of our trainers do a good job at this level. They are all skilful motorists and they know what one ought to do to drive skilfully.

But this is not enough. The purpose behind taking the learner on the road is, in addition to the technical training, to teach him or her to recognise and obey the various regulations and rules. A learner is supposed to learn to stop when he/she comes to a stop sign, to give the right of way when he/she comes to an intersection, to stay in his/her lane and signal when changing lanes, to recognise the presence and right of other road users. Hardly any of this happens. Only three of the 25 learners I spoke with said their trainers paid significant attention to road ethics and rules. The vast majority told me their trainers did not draw their attention to any road regulations or laws. This is not surprising, for if the centre ignores the theoretical part of the process, why should the trainer bother about it?

Clearly, part of the solution lies in making the centres teach the theoretical part. The authorities concerned must find ways of putting these centres under surveillance to make sure they do instruct for the whole period after they collect the JD 10. We cannot leave the matter to the discretion or conscience of those in charge of these centres, many of whom seem to have no discretion and no conscience. The authorities must also find ways of pressuring centres to pressure trainers to teach regulations and rules on the spot. I am sure our authorities know exactly what to do to make centres and trainers observe and behave.

What we teach is what we get, and when we do not do our homework faithfully and ably, the concerned authorities must make sure that we do.

Chechenya crisis shakes up Russian political scene

By Timothy Heritage
Reuters

MOSCOW — The Chechenya debacle has radically altered Russia's political landscape, plunging the main democratic party into crisis and deepening splits among already fragmented factions.

Now, as Russia's parties gear up for parliamentary elections next December, a bewildering array of possible coalitions has appeared because Chechenya has broken old alliances, created new ones and shifted the natural fault lines in parliament.

Ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy has become an unlikely ally of President Boris Yeltsin by supporting the military intervention while Yegor Gaidar, a liberal and long-time Yeltsin supporter, has split with the Kremlin chief.

Russian politics is now more than a question of Democrats against Com-

munists or liberals against conservatives. The Chechenya crisis has become a defining point for party relations.

"The Chechen war dramatically transformed the constellation of Russia's political forces," Michael McFaul, an analyst at the independent Moscow Carnegie Centre thinktank, said.

Not surprisingly, political analysts are hedging their bets on who will win the election to the state Duma, the lower house, or the presidential election expected in June 1996.

But many agree that Russia's Choice, the leading democratic party, has been the big loser.

"There is a split in the democratic camp. And through its reaction to Chechenya, Russia's Choice has started to lose popularity and voters," Mark Urnov, head of the Presidential Analytical Centre, told Reuters.

"It started to lose badly

at the moment when (party leader) Yegor Gaidar went into sharp and open opposition to the president," said Mr. Urnov, whose centre provides the Kremlin with analytical reports on wide-ranging issues.

Mr. Gaidar's break with Mr. Yeltsin in December divided the party. Some prominent members, such as wealthy businessman Oleg Boiko and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, quit over the rift.

It also removed Mr. Yeltsin's most loyal support in parliament and threw the party's election strategy into confusion. Russia's Choice had counted on Mr. Yeltsin's support in the December election in exchange for offering to back him in the presidential poll.

The party's leaders play down the problems. "No one can win from the situation in Chechenya and I have been happy with the party's standing in recent opinion polls," said Sergei Yushenkov, one of the par-

ty's leading lights.

But a Russia's Choice insider said: "The party is in chaos."

Some commentators saw the democratic parties' opposition to the Chechenya crisis as an opportunity for them to unite, but this has not proved to be the case.

Russia's Choice and other democratic groups, such as the Yabloko Fraction led by economist Grigory Yavlinsky, remain divided — largely because of personal ambitions and a traditional inability to join forces.

Failing to contest elections on a joint platform could water down the reformers' presence in parliament because some liberal parties are likely to fail on their own to muster the five per cent of votes needed to take up seats.

"In the democratic camp there is a lack of unity and coordination of actions," said Sergei Filatov, head of Mr. Yeltsin's presidential

administration. "The danger of such a situation for the democratic development of the country is obvious."

Hoping to cash in will be Mr. Zhirinovskiy's Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), which won almost 25 per cent of the votes in the last election to the Duma in December 1993.

The LDPR remains a force to be reckoned with. But most commentators expect it to receive fewer votes than in 1993 because Mr. Zhirinovskiy in no longer a novelty and the Chechenya conflict has not inspired a mass outburst of nationalism.

Mr. Zhirinovskiy's support for Mr. Yeltsin on Chechenya is also probably only a passing phase. A firm alliance with such an outspoken nationalist looks out of the question.

Hoping to plug gaps in the political scene are the new Social Democratic Party launched in February by Alexander Yakovlev, once

a Soviet communist leader, and the new, centrist Forward Russia group of former finance minister Boris Fyodorov.

But the Communist Party could now mount the greatest challenge. It has suffered no internal discord over Chechenya and has become the government's loudest critic.

The respected Izvestia newspaper said the communists could win 40 per cent of the seats in parliament, although many analysts say that figure looks too high.

A communist coalition with the LDPR has also been talked about. But Chechenya has done little to promote it — the LDPR backs the military campaign and the communists oppose it.

Many commentators say that although the political scene has been shaken up, there are no clear obvious winners and the final result may be no dramatic changes.

Choose employment and then work together for it

By Michel Hansenne

GENEVA — The world is in the midst of the worst employment crisis since the Great Depression. The crisis affects industrialised, transition and developing countries alike. Thirty per cent of the global labour force, some 620 million men and women, are afflicted by unemployment and underemployment. Job insecurity is increasing everywhere.

Yet a disturbing level of indifference and passivity prevails in world opinion, reinforced by constant gloomy diagnoses and prognoses that highlight the job-destroying effects of new technology and global economic competition.

It is time to snap out of this needless and damaging pessimism and to search for constructive solutions. Much can be done through a combination of international and national actions.

The current employment crisis is not a predetermined consequence of uncontrollable economic forces. It is the result of commissions or omissions in economic and social policies and shortcomings in institutional arrangements, all of which can be improved.

What is necessary is to reinstate full employment as a major policy objective. The weakening of the commitment to full employment in the last two decades has contributed to the worsening of employment conditions by reducing the effort and attention devoted to the problem.

The top priority has to be creation of a more conducive framework for higher rates of economic growth and job creation in the global economy. A core re-

quirement is consolidation of progress towards an open and stable system of international trade and investment flows. Properly managed, this can provide a powerful engine for growth and job creation that brings benefits to all countries.

Increased economic competition and new technologies do destroy jobs, but they also create millions of new jobs in activities which did not exist a few decades ago. Moreover, trade and investment are not a zero-sum game, but generate mutual benefits in terms of market expansion and a more efficient international division of labour. These lead to higher rates of growth and job creation.

The potential gains from trade cannot be achieved without national policies designed to respond to new opportunities in the global economy. Open economic policies accompanied by positive adjustment measures are far more effective than protectionism as a means of achieving sustained growth of employment.

There will be social costs in the process of adjusting to globalisation. But by ensuring that the burden of adjustment is shared equitably and that there are effective compensatory policies for affected groups, these social costs can be minimised. It is essential that the social partners participate fully in the formulation and application of adjustment programmes, and that respect for fundamental workers' rights be a part of any such programme.

Even with the right national policies, stronger international arrangements are needed to deal with

problems arising from financial shocks and trade conflicts. Traditional instruments of national policy are no longer sufficient for ensuring stable economic growth and social objectives.

For example, a country acting in isolation to pursue macroeconomic expansion soon runs into balance of payment and exchange rate difficulties. Attempts to raise labour standards risk being undone by cost competition from other countries.

While the benefits of a market economy are indisputable, total laissez-faire will ensure neither stable growth nor equity. And exclusive pursuit of strictly economic objectives without regard to their social consequences will not serve to overcome employment.

Blanket deregulation of labour markets is unlikely to resolve unemployment. Labour market performance has deteriorated in all OECD countries, irrespective of differences in regulation.

This is not to say that the regulatory status quo should be defended myopically. Some adjustments need to be made — to rules governing the length and organisation of working time, to unemployment benefit systems, to non-wage labour costs. But the very real benefits of labour market regulation must be recognised.

It is imperative to develop an appropriate international framework to ensure that the economic and social objectives in a global economy are examined and pursued in a coherent way. The problems of recent years have shown how badly such a framework is

needed.

A unique opportunity to start moving in this direction will be the World Summit for Social Development next month in Copenhagen.

The International Labour Office (ILO) will seek a renewed collective commitment to the goal of full, productive and freely chosen employment, backed up by a firm plan of action. We do not need new institutions, but we do need to make better, more coordinated use of existing institutions.

A practical way of ensuring greater attention to social issues is to involve ministers of labour and social affairs with their counterparts in finance and economic ministries in the framing and monitoring of major economic policies at the national and international levels.

The Group of Seven (G-7) jobs summit last year was a welcome innovation from this standpoint, and provides an example of what should be done on a more regular basis.

Such a political forum would be strengthened by international organisations which report on developments in the global economy and monitor progress towards the goals of the summit. Political leadership from this forum would help set the agenda for international institutions, whether those of the United Nations or Bretton Woods, in order to ensure that growth is both sustainable and equitable.

The writer is director general of the International Labour Office (ILO). The article is reprinted from the International Herald Tribune.

LETTERS

AUA in Aqaba

To the Editor:

GIVING Amman University of Amman (AUA) a chance makes sense — in Aqaba. In addition to the compatibility in the initials, Aqaba meets most of the requirements the university would need to survive.

It is internationally accessible by land, air and sea. Jordan's only shoreline Aqaba provides a natural classroom for top marine biology programmes. It is relatively close to Jordan's most spectacular and archaeological sites, the academic possibilities are endless and self explanatory. Aqaba is Jordan's major tourist draw, a perfect location for a hotel management programme.

On the downside, the population of the Aqaba governorate is small, but a top rate U.S.-affiliated university in Jordan's only seaside resort should generate enough appeal to draw the necessary enrollment.

Kareem Talhoumi,
Amman.

Jordanian universities deserve better

To the Editor:

MY WIFE and I are in Jordan enjoying our work with colleagues in the Mathematics Department at the University of Jordan. My wife is privileged to have a Fulbright grant from the Jordanian-American Commission for Educational Exchange.

We read with interest your editorial on the proposal for establishing a new university in Amman, patterned after the American universities in Cairo and Beirut. We do not express an opinion on this issue but one of the statements you make provokes comment. You say, "The level of our universities is clearly inferior to what is available outside the country."

We should like to say that as far as the Mathematics Department at the University of Jordan is concerned (and we do not feel qualified to judge other departments or universities in Jordan), the quality of faculty and the quality of programmes are of high calibre and compare very favourably with institutions in the United States with which we are familiar. A diligent student at the University of Jordan can get a mathematical education of very high quality.

Your negative comments do not do justice to the educational resources available here.

Christine Ayoub,
Prof. Emerita, Penn State University,
Raymond Ayoub
Prof. Emeritus, Penn State University.

No news, good news

By Jean-Claude Elias

The last computer show, organised by the American embassy in Amman and which took place last week at the Philadelphia Hotel, did nothing but confirm the impression we had at the previous Jordan Technology Show — nothing really new in the computer world.

I can easily imagine how readers can be shocked by such a statement. Haven't I heard of CD-ROMS and colour laser printers? What about the Internet and the Information Super Highway?

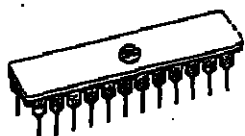
To set the record straight, I must first admit that the show was very professionally prepared. Though confined in a relatively small area, it was pleasant and very business-like. One of the best I have seen.

Of the 20 exhibitors or so, five were not specialised computer companies. A clear indication that Information Technology hardware could not fill the place by itself. A soft drink maker, a car rental company, a courier service company, a satellite vendor and a radio paging organisation were presenting their products.

Well, CD-ROMS are not a novelty anymore and colour laser printers have been around since 1992. So much for the hardware. Of course, the Pentium PC is the latest trend in computing power and speed but most users in Jordan seem quite happy with their 486-DX2-66 machines for the time being, given the price of the Pentium is still a little high for the local market. Users would beef up their existing 486 computer with more memory and disk storage rather than buying a completely new Pentium PC model.

As far as the Internet and the Information Super Highway are concerned, yes, they are relatively new. It is worth however remembering that they are software and not hardware products. The Internet is

chip talk



already available in the country to anyone who wishes to subscribe. Currently, the local representative can only offer batch processing and off-line service, that is electronic mail that is not immediately transmitted. All messages are stored on a computer's hard disk and then processed, as a batch, twice a day. The on-line service has been promised for summer. The off-line service is reasonably priced. Let's wait to see how the on-line processing would be. We still have to wait for the actual Super Highway that seems in its experimental stage yet, even in the West.

The bottom line is that, apart from a couple of major hardware improvements, the most influential innovations in the last two years were on the software front. The release of Microsoft Office package (word processing, spreadsheets, data base and communication) and its Arabised equivalent, consolidated by the introduction of the new MS-DOS 6.22, have done more than any piece of hardware to change the shape of personal computing. And this is only one example.

Analysts used to say that software is so much more important than hardware that one day will come when hardware is given free-of-charge with software. Perhaps this day will come sooner than expected.

If something is of no interest to me, I don't see it! But...

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

One fundamental aspect of a city is its potential to either civilise or brutalise. Unfortunately, Amman, now, fails to provide a basic healthy and civilising environment for its inhabitants.

If cities can only reflect the values and character of the people that live in them, then sadly enough, Amman has become a true consumerist and materialistic town.

Failing to teach children about the environment leaves them ill-equipped to participate in the process of respecting and improving the city that so critically affects their future life. In France, for example, "culture" is the fourth highest voting issue. But where does it rank for us? I am one of the lucky few who, when they feel the squeeze of Amman, can escape to the humanising spaces of the Place Beaubourg, La Defense of Paris and the squares and parks of London. Yet still, people wonder why I like to go off to those places every few months.

I enjoy the animation that pavement calls bring to the street, the informal liveliness of the public square, the mixture of shops, offices and homes, that makes a living neighbourhood.

At a time when Paris doubles its pedestrian areas on the Champs Elysees, and when London is increasing the pedestrian space on Oxford Street, at the expense of traffic, we, as befits our callous materialistic nature, take from our sidewalks, and ultimately from pedestrians, and give to the streets, and cars.

This has got to stop. We should without hesitation pedestrianise downtown. Sweifiah, Um-Uhainah and any other commercial pockets that we have created over the past few years. We can, and should, provide the people with the open space in which they can be human again; space that beams with life, be it cafes, street art, carnivals. We owe it to ourselves and to our children.

Yet we have to bear in mind that because modern Amman is a fairly young city, we have missed the opportunity to turn it into a healthy, lively and an

open-minded city. Regrettably, we continue to fail to re-interpret and re-invent the dense and diverse urban city. Accordingly, we are all guilty.

As a result of our actions, and even more our inaction, Amman has become socially divisive and environmentally hazardous. The car has enabled its citizens to drive, and so live, away from its centre. But when a city, any city, spreads out, as Amman clearly has, it becomes uneconomical to expand public transport systems, except with cheaper fuel and so at the expense of clean air, which still fail to provide an alternative to driving. So the car, and all the havoc associated with it, reigns supreme.

We should not let reason and reflection control our unconscious expressions. Take this story for example: Once upon a time there was a centipede that was amazingly good at dancing with all hundred legs. All the creatures of the forest were impressed with the exquisite dance. All except a tortoise that is. How can I get the centipede to stop dancing? Thought the tortoise. He couldn't just say he didn't like the dance. Neither could he say he danced better himself, that would obviously be untrue. So he devised a devilish plan. He wrote the following letter to the centipede. "I am a devoted admirer of your dancing. I must know how you go about it when you dance. Is it that you lift your left leg number 28 and then your right leg number 39? Or do you begin by lifting your right leg number 17 before you lift your left leg number 44? I await your answer." When the centipede read the letter, she immediately began to think about what she did when she danced. Which leg did she lift first? And which leg next? And she never danced again.

That's the way it goes when imagination gets strangled by reasoned deliberation. My words should not embarrass us. We are not related to the ostrich. We can fulfill the words "tell me how you live and I will tell you who you are." It is a mere bagatelle.

This piece is written for Shireen to remind her that we create our own life.

The story of the centipede was a present from Alberto Knox and Sophie Amundsen c/o Sophie's World.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, March 2

1:30 Animated Classics — Sinbad

2:00 Feature Film — Herbie Goes To Monte Carlo

Starring: Dean Jones & Don Knotts

Herbie the VW falls in love with a sports car as they compete in a race from Paris to Monte Carlo. There are a lot of laughs in this one.

3:30 Football Match

FC Barcelona vs Paris St. Germain

7:30 Road To Avonlea

Sara tries to succeed at playing matchmaker to one of her relatives and a shabby-looking man when she gets suddenly taken back by a painful fact.

8:30 Documentary — The Blue Revolution

An enthralling series on the political and green issues of our blue underworld, the distressed deep.

9:10 The Hat Squad

The Hat Squad is called to protect one of the DEA's most valuable agents, a drug-detecting dog, when the leader of a cocaine ring puts out a \$25,000 contract on the animal's life.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Shirley Bassey In Concert

11:20 Bangkok Hilton

Friday, March 3

7:30 Street Hawk

8:15 Desmond's

8:50 You Bet Your Life

9:10 Grand Slam

10:00 News In English

10:20 B.B. King / The Blues Summit

11:20 Feature Film — Shout

Starring: James Walters, Heather Graham & J. Travolta

Saturday, March 4

1:30 Animated Classics — Beauty & The Beast

2:00 Feature Film — The Last Flight Of Noah's Ark

Starring: Elliott Gould & Genevieve Bujold

A story of an unemployed pilot who, against his better judgement, agrees to fly a plane full of farm animals to a Pacific island for a young missionary.

7:30 Road To Avonlea

8:20 A New Series

9:10 The Cape Rebel

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Leave Of Absence

Starring: Brian Dennehy & Blythe Donner

A man decides to make up for the great suffering he has caused to his wife but only after he learns how to pay the price so dearly.

12:00 The Maid Of Orleans (Opera)

Sunday, March 5

1:30 Animated Classics — Aladdin

2:30 My Secret Identity

3:00 Feature Film — Ernest Goes To Camp

Starring: Jim Varney & Victoria Racimo

7:30 The Bold And The Beautiful

Beverly Hills is the glittering backdrop for The Bold And The Beautiful, a dramatic series tracing the lives and loves, fortunes and feuds of several families as they struggle for fame, wealth and power in the fashion industry.

8:30 Step By Step

9:00 The Album Show

9:30 Heartbeat

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Stolen Babies

Starring: Lea Thompson & Kathleen Quinlan

A female-led gang which specialises in kidnapping and selling babies gets into deadlock as it stands at loggerheads with an obstinate public organisation.

12:00 The Hidden Room

Monday, March 6

7:30 The Bold And The Beautiful

8:30 South Beach

Diamond In The Rough

10:00 News In English

10:20 Scarlet And Black

Scarlet And Black is a tale of passion, power and intrigue in post-Napoleonic France. Julian Sorel rises from his father's saw mill to the aristocratic drawing rooms of Paris. His hero and inspiration is Napoleon Bonaparte, the penniless lieutenant who rose to become emperor of France and with whom he shares dreams of glory.

Tuesday, March 7

7:30 The Bold And The Beautiful

8:30 Home Improvement

9:10 Documentary — The Nature Of Things

The Tree That Changed The World

10:00 News In English

10:20 Documentary — Watergate

Massacre

This episode uncovers a naked attempt by the president to overthrow the rule of law. Nixon was never to recover.

Wednesday, March 8

7:30 The Bold And The Beautiful

8:30 Documentary — The Marvellous Machine

The Ear

9:10 Berlin Break

There's a new world order. But two of its most daring soldiers, representing opposite sides, aren't ready to retire from the only way of life they've ever known. Willy Richter from West Germany and Valentin Renko, a Soviet Georgian, are two master spies with mythic reputations.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Prison

10:40 Snowy River

Man And The Boy

11:30 Keeping Up Appearances

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

FANTASTIC FACTS

★ British General James L'Amy was absent from Jamaica for a few days and in his absence his fiancée was pronounced dead from the dread Yellow Fever. She was buried in the family mausoleum. On his return the distraught general insisted that he see her beloved's face for the last time. As he did he saw a flicker of life. After a few sips of brandy she revived — and survived as his wife for another 41 years!!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Eccentric American millionaire William Randolph Hearst was so fond of telephones that he had them fitted all over his house — and even in the gardens. Many were concealed in tree trunks!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ If you were getting married many years ago in Europe, you would probably have been given an onion as a present! A long time ago, onions were considered very valuable. If you died 5,000 years ago in Egypt, you would have had the inside of your tomb decorated with paintings of onions. The Egyptians also used an onion to swear an oath. The onion takes its name from the Latin word "unio" which means "large pearl."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

— Be so good as to forgive me. Takarram wa'saamehni.
— May I speak freely? Hal tasamah an atakallam be-hurriya?
— I do not meddle with such things. La atadakh'khal be-omoor kahazehi.
— I beg your indulgence. Arjook an tatasahhal.
— It's all my fault. Al-zanbi zanbi.
— Please forgive my thoughtlessness. Arjoo an taghfir lee tashhee.
— What a misfortune! Ya lala min musa'ibah!
— It's a heart-rending sight! Innaho manzar tafafat lehawlehi al-akbad.
— It's a dastardly act! Innaho amalun khasis.
— It cannot be helped. Ma bel-yad heela.
— Great God! Have mercy upon me. Ya Allah ya Azim, Irahman!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

JOKES

★ A man was standing in the zoo, sticking his tongue out at the snakes.
"What are you doing that for?" the zoo-keeper asked him.
"Well, they started it!" he replied.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ PATIENT: Doctor, doctor, I've a dual personality.
DOCTOR: Well, as this interview is strictly confidential, one of you had better wait outside.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ What did the calculator say to the mathematician?
— You can count on me!

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. How is the ordinateur better known as?
2. Which city is called the Athens of the north?
3. Name the weekly magazine Mahatma Gandhi published and edited?
4. In the world science, what do the initials NMR stand for?
5. Where are the Drygalsky Mountains?
6. Which historian is called "the father of lies and the first sightseer"?

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THIRTY NAME READINGS

AGNES

MEANING: The name AGNES has the fine meaning of "Pure."

CHARACTER: This child will be a hard worker and can build up things, actually or metaphorically. She is full of dreams, yet also very practical. She worries too much and has an excess of sympathy with suffering, so that she will wear herself out trying to help. She should have a good singing voice. She needs praise and appreciation to keep her happy.

LIFE LESSONS: She must learn not to jump to conclusions and not to overwork herself.

CAREER: She should take up some form of business and, if possible, should run her own job, not be employed. She might be a dressmaker.

LUCKY DAYS: Tuesday and Thursday.

LUCKY NUMBERS: 4 & 6.

LUCKY MOTTO: All work and no play make Jack a dull boy.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

PUZZLES

(A) ADD FOR N ADAGE:

Can you, by taking three consecutive letters from each of the following words, make up a well-known proverb?

MACADAM — CHRISTMAS — NYLON — HOOKAH — MISTAKE — TWINGE

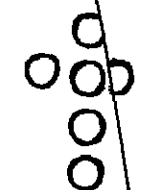
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(B) SIMPLICITY ITSELF

Here is the other error I want to correct.

This diagram represents six coins in the form of a cross.

What you are required to do is to re-arrange the coins, still in the form of a cross, so that there are four horizontal and four vertical ones.



Vienna's Opera Ball — an institution returns

By Arno Makowsky

The boxes were empty for years but now society and business are making contacts again at the city's biggest party

VIENNA — Where on earth are my cufflinks, for heaven's sake? It can't be true. The Opera Ball begins in 20 minutes, the debutants have downed their tiaras, the white limousine is waiting outside and now no cufflinks. What now? Roll up the sleeves inside the arms of the tailcoat? The lady at hotel reception can't help unfortunately, because "she's just sewing on a couple of orders for a gentleman. Right, quickly over to the opera shop, where they're prepared for all emergencies, and where spontaneous ball guests can even rent a ballgown an hour before it begins. Oh well, there's nothing like a safety pin.

Degeneration of manners is unstoppable, as becomes clear later. The charmer from box number nine weaves over to a lady in violet coloured evening dress, and grabs her arm familiarly, rasping "I kiss your hand fair lady" (a traditional Viennese address). How embarrassing! Part of the etiquette you have to know before the Vienna Opera Ball is that firstly, when kissing a lady's hand, you do not actually kiss it, but stop two centimetres short of the back of her hand, so that the most she senses is your breath. And secondly, you definitely shouldn't say anything about "my fair lady" but introduce yourself correctly with a bow.

Perhaps Mr. Elmayer of the famous Viennese Elmayer Dancing School is right when he complains that young people today scarcely know how to behave on such grand social occasions. He was forced to observe chewing gum flying out of the mouth of an enthusiastic young dancer.

That is bad, but not really surprising, after all the Opera Ball has lost most of its renown, or so we hear. In recent years it was far from a sell-out, the expensive boxes in par-

ticular. Demonstrators even stayed away. What remains of the dazzle of the greatest attraction in Vienna's social calendar, of the dazzle of what some see as one of the country's greatest institutions.

The first impression is shocking — some guests have actually had the nerve to turn up in dinner jackets. Wearing a dinner jacket to the Opera Ball is a bit like appearing on the terraces at FC Bayern dressed like a Munich 1860 football fan. Although Opera Ball organiser Lotte Tobisch had smiled understandingly, saying "If you have no white tie and tails, you can come in a dinner jacket. But you mustn't be surprised if people try to order champagne from you."

Now there may certainly be wallies who will have had to go to a costume hire to rent his outfit for the night. But even that shows style! After all it costs 415 marks (about \$270) to hire tails, waistcoat, shirt and patent leather shoes — and the happy feeling of for once belonging to those who throw money around pretty senselessly. On the other hand this expense hardly counts if you consider the other prices: tickets cost 370 marks (about \$220) each and are thus relatively cheap. But those who want to sit with their friends in an exclusive box in the upper circle must pay an additional 23,500 marks (around \$15,600). But anyone who is anyone is there. "If I go to the Viennese Opera Ball," the newspaper, Wiener Kurier quotes a famous millionaire, "I can save myself 30 business trips."

It seems that this kind of social and business networking still works splendidly. For newcomers too. "The famous, the snobs, the whole atmosphere — somehow it's really great," enthuses 18-year-old debutant Mathias

Walser. And his 19-year-old dancing partner Anja Simbrunner says: "I think it's simply a gas!" More than 800 couples had to dance a waltz when they applied for tickets last December — dancing anticlockwise of course. And 180 of these were finally accepted into the "opening committee."

The organiser, Lotte Tobisch, has her own special criteria for choosing her debutants. "A couple of commoners, a couple who have had a word put in for them, that's real democracy." In row number one dances the daughter of the hotelier family Sacher, the son of the Austrian European Union Commissioner in Brussels, Fischel, a couple from Tyrol (complete nobodies, that's the way it has to be) and for the camera teams from the national TV station a beautiful girl from Dubai, with her boyfriend.

As far as the two debts Anja and Mathias are concerned — by the way, Tobisch thinks "Those two are simply gorgeous" — they both believe that terms like "tradition" and "society" have a positive ring. Anja's father is a professor of medicine, Mathias's family is in the drink business. There is an old family-run company of venerable tradition that makes a famous herb-liqueur. One resides in the fashionable 18th District and one's father says things like: "Yes, we're proud to be Viennese."

Mathias and Anja are both studying business in their first semester. Their fellow students also think it's great that they are debutants at Vienna's Opera Ball, and their relatives are thrilled. Have they got any idea why someone might demonstrate against the Opera Ball? No, says Anja, until now, she'd never given the matter any thought. And Mathias says: "That's just envy, it's the only explanation I can think of."

A glance from the window of the marble hall of the Vienna Opera House indicates that the expected demonstration has failed to materialise yet again.

The riot police and their batons on the Opera Square are bored. Gone are the days when there was rioting in Kaerntner Street and demonstrators chanted things like: "They're dancing at the Opera Ball and scheming for our downfall!" The days in 1987, when the leading German politician Franz Josef Strauss sat in a box sipping champagne with Kurt Waldheim, while outside the demonstrators chanted slogans against the nuclear fuel reprocessing plant planned for Wackersdorf in Germany. Nowadays, says Lotte Tobisch, there are no longer any grounds for protest. "The Opera Ball is an anachronistic fairy tale. Turning it into a political issue is ridiculous."

Let's turn back to the ballroom, to the marble stairway, which Sophia Loren is just gracefully ascending, triggering a kind of collective ecstasy among the paparazzi. She is wearing a very daring dress in gold, smiling gently and only when a camera man virtually lowers his lens into her décolleté do two bodyguards intervene. Maybe we should mention that Mrs. Loren didn't fly into Vienna for nothing, but rather — putting it cautiously — that she is there at the invitation of the Viennese construction giant Richard Lugner. People are saying that the publicity crazed Lugner paid 1.2 million schilling (more than \$110,000) for the honour of the actress' appearance. In recent years the ball was graced this way by the presence of such stars as Joan Collins and Harry Belafonte.

Now Lugner sits next to Loren in his box, and every time someone takes a picture, he snuggles up to the diva, hugs her, and grins into the camera, while his wife looks on rather unhappily. And every time a new photographer turns up Sophia Loren unmistakably rolls her eyes towards heaven. She's annoyed. Scenes like that one, and a glance at the champagne bar where two men from Cologne are talking self-importantly about marketing

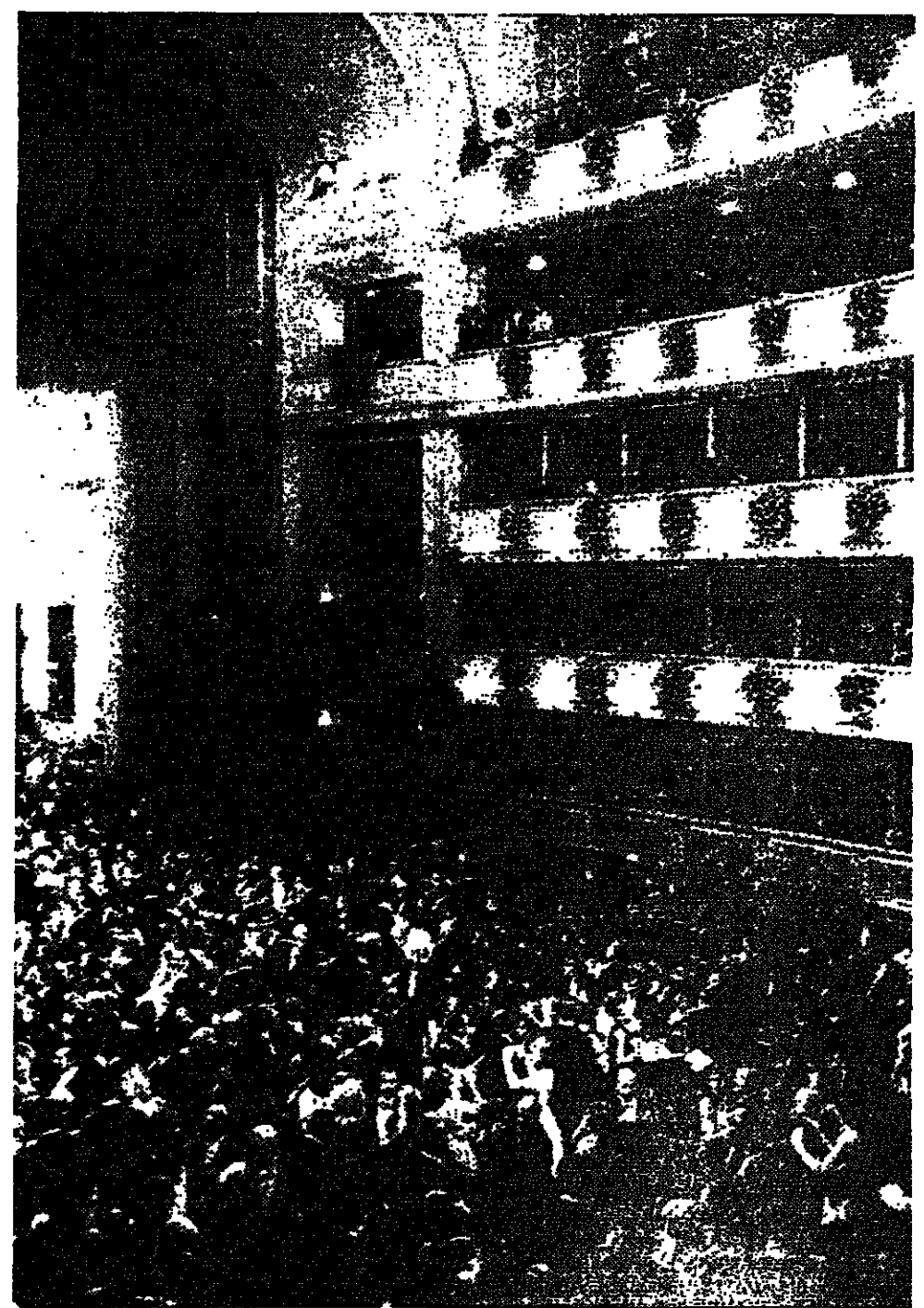
strategies and innovation, take us to the real question of the evening: is the Viennese Opera Ball still the ultimate event on the social calendar at which the international jet set and nobility meet to move in time with the rhythm?

Or has the ball mutated into just another ritual for Japanese and Austrian software manufacturers and nouveau riche businessmen? And — just to exaggerate the question and give it a jet set touch — is all this public posing still "in"? It's a well known fact, that in times of recession you can't even rely on the superrich. And if it weren't for Mr. Lugner and his charter-guests things would not just have looked gloomy in terms of hangers-on, but also regarding famous guests.

But this year everything is different. Everything is sold out! Plácido Domingo is there, Austrian President Thomas Klestil, Shirley MacLaine and never mind world stars like Uschi Glas and Helmut Fischer. "You can feel that things are looking up." By the way, Mrs. Tobisch is a remarkable woman, and not just because she used to be an actress at the famous Burgtheater, before she made the role of "Lady of the Opera Ball" — as the newspaper Neue Kronen Zeitung puts it — her own. She has defended the spectacle ever since with the most beautiful arguments: "Tails aren't elitist, they're egalitarian. Everybody who wears them looks the same."

If needs be she'll even tangle with prominent members of Viennese society like the director of the opera Ioan Holender, who said last year that the Opera Ball had become superfluous. In such instances she points out that the Opera Ball is "the only day in the year when the Opera doesn't make a loss." But anyone who asks her for the honour of a dance, gets the answer: "I'm sorry waltzing makes me ill."

That goes for dancing in general. The debutants have it hammered into



The famous Opera Ball reclaims its place as Vienna's biggest party (file photo)

them during rehearsals that the ladies have to courtesy and how the waltz to the left looks really elegant. "And now the ladies lift their skirts," the dancing teacher thrills. And if you were to hear his voice alone you would swear he was wearing a powdered wig and white gloves. For the average guest at the ball, everything is so much more difficult in the jostling of the crowd. "In order to indicate to the lady that things are about to start," an ancient handbook of dancing etiquette says, "the gentleman gains momentum on his left leg

during the dance and then sets off again on his right foot, placing it between the feet of the lady."

And so they dance on through the night. And some people really do feel ill, whether from the waltz or from the clouds of perfume or from the "Taiteinger Comte De La Champagne" that sells for 4,600 schillings (more than \$400) — the way Richard Burton once did. As the Viennese press tactfully reported at the time, "when he leaned over the balustrade, it was not without consequence for the dancers below."

The ball lasts until five in the morning and in the afternoon they'll all be sitting in their offices again or in the plane — with their clothes bags for their tails and ball-gown. And virtually none of them will have found their way to the city park where they could have met him, the real king of the waltz. There are the statues of Franz Lehar, Robert Stolz, and Johann Strauss, of course sculpted as a golden violinist in the midst of gentle elvish and nymphs. And by the way, you don't need a ticket to get in — Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

The single-bullet theory of Kevin Bacon's career

By Douglas J. Rowe
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — You could call it the single-bullet theory of Kevin Bacon's career, except it's fact. He acknowledges it. Bacon's brief part as a homosexual hustler in Oliver Stone's "JFK" tore through Hollywood's perception of him like an armour-piercing bullet. After all, Bacon had been the teen heartthrob from Footloose and the romantic lead in lightweight comedies like He Said, She Said and She's Having A Baby.

In the last few years, he's played such edgy characters as the military prosecutor in A Few Good Men, the escaped con in The River Wild and now the inmate whose brutalisation in prison led to the eventual shutdown of Alcatraz in Murder In

The First.

While drinking a cappuccino with low-fat milk in the mezzanine eatery of a midtown Manhattan hotel, the 36-year-old Bacon still looks lean and boyish. He's reticent, even aloof, not really warming to the knowledge that his interviewer grew up just a short distance from where he did, or only revealing the Connecticut town where he lives on the condition that it doesn't see print.

At that rate, you'd think he might recoil at the suggestion that his career's on a roll — as if you might be jinxing him. But he warms to that topic.

"Sure," he says. "Yeah, it feels good. I'm probably in a better situation than I've ever been in. My career has had a lot of ups and downs. It's been kind of all over the map."



Kevin Bacon

Movies like Quicksilver, The Big Picture and Queens Logic crashed at the box office. From that down phase, only Tremors

fared better, but only after the fact, developing a bit of a cult following on video.

"I have this theory that there's times when you are as a person, as you walk down life's road, the age that you're at, the way you look, the things that happen in your life, birth and death, joy and tragedy, and all those things are directly related to what's going on in your work," Bacon says.

"I reached a crossroads, a passage if you will, three-four years ago when I was in my early 30s," he says, explaining that he got married, had children, and made some career changes.

"Some of it was very conscious, but also some of the things just kind of laid in."

"JFK was a big turning point in my career, even though it didn't necessari-

ly feel like it at the time. It had a direct effect on getting A Few Good Men. It's had a direct relationship to being involved in Murder In The First and The River Wild and subsequently Apollo 13 (his next movie with Tom Hanks)."

Bacon feels that his JFK role "had a certain resonance," adding: "People just saw something different... It jump-started my career again."

He wasn't surprised he could play it, because he said that from the time he began acting in New York, "I've always been drawn to hard-edged, unusual, sometimes psychotic, sometimes foreign kinds of characters."

He honed his skills off Broadway. Born in Philadelphia and reared in the Rittenhouse Square area of that city, Bacon was the youngest of six

children. His father, Edmund Bacon once served as the director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission.

At 17, he moved to New York to study acting while working as a waiter.

His first notable movie role came in 1978's National Lampoon's Animal House (he's the guy pancaked while calling for calm during the climactic parade scene), then he played the alienated alcoholic Fenwick in Diner before zooming to stardom as the anti-in-his-pants-and-he's-gotta-dance city slicker in 1984's Footloose.

At this point, though, Bacon no longer feels that he has to distance himself from that or any other lighter roles he's filled.

"I want to have a really good part. I'm just better if I have a good part. If I don't have a good part,

I'm just not that good," he says matter-of-factly.

From movie to movie, Bacon can display protean qualities, and in his latest outing, he lost some 25 pounds (11.3 kilograms) wore a prosthetic eye piece, and was made up with scars to depict an inmate deformed and denigrated by his three years in the solitary confinement of a dungeon.

"It's what I aspire to, and it's what I've worked towards," Bacon says.

"Because when I thought about becoming an actor, and when I looked at actors I admired, I thought to myself: the reason I want to do this is because I want to be a bunch of different things. It's not because I want to just be me up there on the screen. I have no interest in being me on the screen. I save me for the people that I love. I'm interested

in being a spaceman or a prisoner or a bad guy or whatever."

The people he saves himself for are his wife, actress Kyra Sedgwick, and their children, 5-year-old Travis and 2-year-old Sosie.

He prefers not to talk much about his family life. "My personal life is not all that interesting, to tell you the truth," he said. "I mean, it's kind of a boring situation: Basically I'm happily married and have two great kids."

And anyway, he thinks what one says can sound so insipid, rather than profound and important, once it appears in print.

"It's like the way that I feel about my wife and kids. How can I put that in a sentence... Poets, songwriters have been trying to write about love for years. And so often they've been completely unsuccessful."

Retrospective celebrates Fellini's fantasy world

By Melanie Goodfellow
Reuters

ROME — Federico Fellini, the rotund late giant of Italian cinema, lies in bed with Giovanni Agnelli, the aquiline-nosed tycoon of car maker Fiat. Agnelli, clad in striped silk pyjamas, looks longingly at a buxom female cavorting naked outside the bedroom window and exclaims: "What a nice bum."

The scene, based on

one of Fellini's dreams, is among the hundreds of his sketches in a major retrospective on the five-times Oscar winner who died in 1993.

Fellini's films, with their chaotic plots, surreal sets and larger-than-life characters, departed from the dour style of neo-realist filmmakers such as Roberto Rossellini.

Fellini thrived on fantasy and the sketches provide an insight into the mind that put Anita

Ekberg in Rome's Trevi Fountain in La Dolce Vita, dressed Catholic cardinals in coloured light bulbs for Roma, and conjured up the nymphomaniac figure of Volpina in Amarcord.

Many of the sketches show scantily-dressed women with oversized breasts and muscular thighs which served as models for the Amazonian sirens he later cast in his films.

The men, by compari-

son, are often scrawny with angst-ridden expressions. In one sketch Fellini shows an anguished Giuseppe Verdi, the 19th century opera composer, staring at four buxom women sitting on the wing of an airplane.

Some of the drawings, such as those featuring Agnelli and Verdi, depict the dreams Fellini recorded on the advice of a German psychoanalyst he met in 1960.

Others include drawings from before he became a director, including some produced for satirical publications and the Funny Face Shop which produced caricatures for allied troops in Rome at the end of World War II.

American actor Anthony Quinn, who played a circus strongman alongside Fellini's wife Giulietta Masina in the director's first Oscar-winning film La Strada, said Fellini advised him

never to tell the truth. "Once after I had been very earnest in a press conference he said: 'Everyone knows the truth. Tell them something they don't know, tell them your mother's a princess and your father's a giant,' Quinn said at the exhibition's opening.

"Federico was always dreaming, even when he was awake. He would scribble down his ideas — restaurant owners became furious because he would draw on table clothes — and they would pop up in his films years later," said Rinaldo Geleng, a family friend.

Part of the retrospective consists of memorabilia from Fellini's some 30 films such as props, costumes, studio stills and story boards.

The section devoted to La Dolce Vita includes a photograph of Anita Ekberg clad in thigh-high rubber boots for the famous scene where she wades with Marcello Mastroianni in the cold waters of Rome's Trevi Fountain.

It also includes doodles Fellini drew of Paparazzi, the ferocious street photographers who hounded the stars and nobility in the film.

The section on La Strada, widely acclaimed as Fellini's masterpiece, displays the costume Masina wore in the role of Gelsomina, the half-wit girl with a big heart.

Asian women go under the knife for Western look

EDITOR'S NOTE — In male-dominated Asia, where beauty is a must for women who want to get ahead, cosmetic surgery is a growth industry. From South Korea to the Philippines to Malaysia, women who can afford it are going under the knife.

By Sheila McNulty
The Associated Press

BANGKOK — Makeup artists complained about her slanted eyes and broad nose. Photographers said they couldn't find her best side. Costume designers balked at dressing her.

Her looks were hurting her career as a singer.

Last spring, 24-year-old Naree Krajang finally decided to do something about it. She underwent plastic surgery to remove some of the skin and fatty tissue on her upper eyelids to make her eyes look rounder and put a fold in the lid. The doctor also implanted a piece of sil-

cone on the bridge of her nose to make it look less flat.

"I didn't want others to criticize or insult me anymore," she says.

Fair skin, smaller, folded eyelids and high nose bridges — Caucasians features — have always been considered the basic elements of a beautiful face in Asia.

Now, as Thailand embraces fast-food restaurants, blue jeans and Hollywood movies in its zeal to Westernize, its women are even more determined to attain those attributes. From South Korea to the Philippines to Malaysia, women who

can afford it are going under the knife.

"It's a trend," says Kanjana Spindler, editor in chief of the Thai edition of the women's magazine Elle. "You can see all these plastic surgery clinics popping up like mushrooms."

Montana Ratchadamon, 30, the owner of a furniture store, had her third nose job recently in one of those clinics. The first one had left the bridge too high and the second one left the silicone implant too visible.

Her nostrils are now lined with stitches and her nose is swollen from her third operation. It will be up to six months before the swelling subsides and she'll know if she likes this latest nose.

"If it's not beautiful, I must get a new one," she

says. "I want to be beautiful."

Her husband, Chot Thammathong, 32, says Montana was beautiful before she started getting nose jobs: "Even the first one was unnecessary."

But Montana, a petite, pleasant-looking woman, thinks he is just being nice. She is considering implants to increase the size of her breasts and surgery on her full, sexy lips to make them smaller.

Although beauty is important throughout Asia, in Thailand it appears to consume many women.

They often refuse to wear motorcycle helmets — in violation of the law — for fear of marring their hair. Their clothes are never wrinkled and their makeup is always skillfully applied. Many use creams to lighten their skin. And

plastic surgery has become a must among the in-crowd.

"Thais are very vain by nature," Spindler says. "In this country, people always look at the surface and place so much emphasis on outside appearances."

Dr. Thep Vechavisit works 12-hour days, seven days a week to disguise the conceived flaws in those appearances. Women often come in groups to undergo the half-hour operations in his tiny operating room.

The ear, nose and throat doctor does about 100 nose and eye operations a month in between face-lifts and breast implant operations in a clinic below his apartment. The charge is \$320 for eye surgery and \$480 for a nose job to "Westernize"

his patients.

Dr. Surasak Muangsombut, head of the Plastic Surgeons Association, cautions that there are more than 1,000 untrained doctors performing such operations in Bangkok because Thai law permits anyone with a medical degree to perform surgery. Countless women have therefore suffered permanent scars, painful infections and even implants that wear a hole in their noses and pop out.

Dr. Surasak says he spends much of his time fixing what untrained surgeons have wrought.

Despite the widespread accounts of botched surgeries, Thai women think the operations are worth the risk. Some believe the proper eyes or nose can literally change their lives.

Thadsuang Maneejan, a 19-year-old soap opera star, says she underwent a \$4,000 surgery last November because everyone said her fatty eyelids made her look sad. Her colleagues, her director and even a fortuneteller told her they were bad luck.

Instead of the smaller, unhappy parts that dominated her career in the past, when she always looked sad, the actress says she now is able to get key roles to play happy women who attract men.

"Now I can act sexy," she says. Although actresses and singers were the only ones who could afford the operations when they became popular more than a decade ago, the proliferation of clinics, and resulting competitive prices, has

made the surgery affordable to Thailand's growing middle class.

Dr. Swatana Poksawad says women from all walks of life come to her clinic. Often, she says, mothers encourage their daughters to undergo the operations between high school and college, where they will change friends. She herself performed eyelid and nose surgery on both of her daughters during that transition. She hasn't suggested it, however, to her 18-year-old son.

Thais generally believe that men don't need to go to such extremes to improve their appearances.

"For women, beauty is first," says Phuklan, a 20-year-old salesman at a major department store. "For me, their character, habits and actions are more important."

Study: Grape juice may be as beneficial as wine in unclogging arteries

By Rob Lever
Agence France Presse

WASHINGTON — Grape juice may be as effective as red wine in preventing clogged arteries, researchers have concluded in a study that may explain why the French have low levels of heart disease despite high fat diets.

The University of Wisconsin study showed it took three times as much grape juice by volume to achieve the same preven-

tive effects as red wine but it offered a method for protecting against heart disease for people who cannot or do not drink alcohol.

"It's better if we can find the beneficial substance in alcoholic beverages without drinking because it will be safer for a lot of people," said John Folts, the lead researcher in a report published this month in *Circulation*, a journal of the American Heart Association.

"Alcohol abuse is a major problem in this country, and the public perception is always that if two drinks a day is good, then four or five may be better," he added.

Mr. Folts said it was too soon to call for a recommendation to drink grape juice, but said people with heart problems might want to consider it. In general, the darker the beverage, the more flavonoids are present.

Mr. Folts and his colleagues last year reported

that two glasses of red wine a day can inhibit clotting that can lead to coronary thrombosis, a disease of the arteries that can ultimately lead to heart attacks. Other studies have shown moderate alcohol consumption to have a similar effect.

The researchers believed that the beneficial substances in red wine were flavonoids, naturally occurring compounds that reduce the stickiness of blood platelets. Flavonoids are found in the skins, stems and seeds of grape juice, which are removed late in the fermentation for red wine.

Flavonoids are also present to varying degrees in grape juice, beer and some fruits and vegetables.

To further their theory, the researchers tested grape juice in a group of participants, confirming that grape juice provided the same beneficial effect. Research animals were also tested.

The so-called "French paradox" deals with a series of studies showing the comparatively low rate of heart attacks among the French even though they eat nearly four times as much butter and three times as much lard as Americans.

Despite similarities in factors such as smoking and weight, Americans have a rate of fatal heart attacks 2.5 times as great as the French.

This has been attributed

to regular wine consumption by the French, but other theories, including the use of olive oil and other cooking habits in the Mediterranean, also have been explored.

In 1974, Mr. Folts was the first researcher to demonstrate that Aspirin may help reduce the risk of heart attacks by decreasing platelet activity.

In his latest study, he said flavonoids may be even better protection because, unlike Aspirin, their effect is not in-

creased or decreased by stress and other factors that raise adrenaline.

Mr. Folts said flavonoids may be even more effective if they can be dried and produced in pill form.

The research team is currently studying the effect of beer, another beverage with the same anti-clogging substance. Preliminary indications are that dark beers may be more beneficial than light-colored beers.

Experimental drugs offer promise for reversing bone loss

By Ellen Knickmeyer
The Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — A drug that could become one of the first new treatments for osteoporosis in more than a decade built bone in women with the disease, a study said.

The drug Alendronate

was given to 516 women over three years, producing an average 6.8 per cent increase in bone density at the spine, said Merck and Co., which plans next month to submit it for Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. It usually takes about 19 months for a company to

win marketing approval.

Patients in the trials in 15 countries outside the United States also showed 4.8 per cent and 6.9 per cent increase at the two spots on the hip most prone to fracture.

"That's pretty substantial," said Richard Gelula of the National Osteoporosis

Foundation in Washington. "If they can reduce bone loss, that's a fantastic achievement. If they can add some bone density" better yet.

If the drug works, it's good news for the 25 million Americans, many of them women, suffering from the brittle bone dis-

ease. It's even better news that other potential therapies are in the pipeline as well.

"At the moment, we have perhaps one really effective therapy, hormone replacement therapy," said Dr. Ian Reid of the University of Auckland, clinical investigator in the Alendronate trial, who presented his results

at a conference in Melbourne, Australia.

"Patients... have an enormous need for an alternative," he said.

While the hormones Estrogen and Calcitonin have been the only approved forms of treatment since 1984, drugs that may actually stimulate bone growth are in the laboratory along with

Alendronate.

A University of California at San Francisco study released this week showed promising results with a parathyroid hormone.

A four-week trial of the drug on rats with lab-induced osteoporosis showed all the rats regained lost bone mass, and some actually added

extra bone.

"This is really the first real chance we have to actually reverse osteoporosis," said Dr. Nancy Lane, the parathyroid study's lead author.

An early candidate for bone building, sodium fluoride, produced bones that weighed more but also snapped more.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

IN LIKE A LION

By Louis Sabin

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U.S. consensus on foreign policy goals is collapsing

By Martin Walker

THAT THE United States "should take an active part in world affairs" has been axiomatic among Americans for almost 50 years. Whatever other issues divided them, this consensus has held steady. Yet now, this sense of shared purpose is beginning to break down. Back in 1947, as the cold war was getting under way, 68 per cent of the U.S. public backed an active U.S. role, against 25 per cent who disagreed. Last year, the figures were almost identical with 67 per cent saying yes and 28 per cent saying no.

These figures, from the National Opinion Research Centre, reveal a durable consensus. The proportion of those calling for an active role has never fallen below 65 per cent (in 1986), nor risen higher than 73 per cent (in 1991).

The proportion wanting to stay out of world affairs has never risen above 32 per cent (in 1976 and 1986) nor dropped below 24 per cent (in 1991).

The evidence that something is starting to change is fairly recent. Surveys by the U.S. Information Agency and the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, and by Newt Gingrich's favourite, pollster Frank Luntz, all so recent that the figures are still being processed, suggest, suddenly, a fast-growing mood of introspection and fatigue with the tiresome world.

"The end of the cold war spawned fears that the U.S. would return to isolationism. Evidence to support those fears is growing," said Brent Scowcroft, national security adviser to President George Bush and Gerald Ford.

"American foreign policy not only has become pas-

sive and diminished, but also more narrow-minded, short-sighted and, increasingly, go-it-alone. In a word, U.S. foreign policy is becoming increasingly 'unilateralist' as well as 'isolationist'."

Yet Bob Zoellick, counsellor in James Baker's state department and the outstanding foreign policy brain in the Bush era, said the real change was in the policy-making elite.

"Go into the small print of all the polls and you find Americans still want to play an international role, and are very clear about our vital interests: The oil of the (Arab) Gulf, stability in Europe and East Asia and the Western hemisphere.

"You find a similar consensus among the elites in the wider civil society outside Washington, the business and banking circles and the non-governmental organisations involved in aid and humanitarian and environmental work. It is among the political and policy elites that the consensus has broken. They are all over the map, and what is striking is the lack of a catalysing leadership — which means the president."

Mr. Zoellick and Mr. Scowcroft, like most Republicans, suggest the Clinton administration is especially to blame. Mr. Scowcroft is particularly critical of Bill Clinton's drift away from the Bosnian arms embargo. "Rather than pick and win a fight with congress, it would abandon unilaterally a policy we had forged with our NATO allies," he said.

Democrats, equally inevitably, tend to blame the Republicans, particularly their new congressmen, almost half of whom have been elected since 1992. They not only have no

The politicians and the public are starting to put a price on the Pax Americana — and are taking fright at the world out there

memory of the cold war; even the Gulf war was over before they came to Washington.

"The imperative of American leadership is a central lesson of our times," the secretary of state, Warren Christopher, told them last month.

"Imagine what the world would have been like without it in just the last two years alone. We might have four nuclear states in the former Soviet Union instead of one. We might have no GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) or NAFTA (North American Free Trade Area). We might have brutal dictators still terrorising Haiti. And we might very well have Iraqi troops back in Kuwait."

The broken consensus is also plain in institutions such as the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), where Henry Kissinger and the former Democratic defence secretary Harold Brown are chairing a study group on Europe and the future of NATO.

"We are absolutely split on whether NATO should be expanded into Eastern Europe or not, so divided I cannot see any policy recommendation emerging," said Paula Dobriansky, a member of the CFR group and who served on Ronald Reagan's national security council.

But these arguments between Americans seem beside the point to foreign observers, who see a more

fundamental change taking place in the way the U.S. relates to the world.

Wolfgang Pordzik runs the Adenauer Institute in Washington, part think-tank and part embassy in the U.S. for Germany's Christian Democrats.

"The nature of U.S. leadership has changed from the military and alliance form of the cold war, to an economic leadership where the U.S. is no longer so dominant, more first among equals," he suggested.

"This means the American political class is much more concerned about the costs and benefits of involvement or intervention. This is partly a question of resources, which are constrained by budget deficits, and partly a question of alarm about U.S. casualties."

"Perhaps the Gulf war gave a misleading image of the costs of military operations. Even president Bush said the Vietnam syndrome of nervousness about casualties was finally buried. It wasn't. This became acute in Somalia, when 18 U.S. rangers were killed in a single day, and the TV screens broadcast appalling pictures of the corpse of an American helicopter pilot being dragged through Mogadishu. To be in America that week was to be aware of the whole country demanding to know what had gone wrong and what was the point of this."

Ed Luttwak, a consultant

to the national security council and a genuinely original, iconoclastic thinker at Washington's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, believes the change is demographic, a result of smaller families, where the loss of a son means a much deeper emotional shock.

"A superpower does not only intervene when vital national interests are at stake, but has the luxury of choice to intervene and take casualties in the case of marginal interests, to indulge its preferences as well as its strategic needs," he said.

"To be deterred by fear of losses is to force a superpower into the strategic profile of a petty principality."

Dr. Luttwak says the experience of the cold war has for 50 years accustomed America to the comforting delusion that a great strategic campaign can be sustained and won without war. The cold war's two serious military campaigns, in Korea and Vietnam, were deeply unpopular and controversial, and led to the toppling of two Democratic presidencies.

Professor James Chace of Bard College, another member of CFR, pointed to the role of the United Nations. "What is taking place in America is a retreat from internationalism because it is seen as costing too much in money and in lives, and promiscuously committed to causes which may not be clearly in American interests nor under American

command. That is why the U.N. is the focus of so much resentment.

"This retreat from internationalism was very tightly focused, resenting U.S. intervention in marginal causes, like Somalia or Haiti, or in places like Bosnia which were seen as a European responsibility. But the suspicion about internationalism is now starting to widen ominously, to include economic matters like the attempt to rescue the Mexican peso," Prof. Chace added.

This argument is taken further by Professor David Calleo of the School of Advanced International Studies. He fears the retreat from internationalism could grow as the U.S. public comes to understand that the global economy increases the U.S. commitment overseas.

"The fact is we are extending our international obligations. We are seeking to expand NATO into Eastern Europe. Put the Haiti operation to one side, the rescue of the Mexican peso shows the degree to which we are extending our obligations in the Western hemisphere.

"In the name of nuclear non-proliferation, we are deepening our involvement in Asia. This is most visible in North Korea, where we are arranging compensation in energy supplies for dismantling nuclear reactors. But we are also compensating Kazakhstan for giving

up the nuclear capability inherited from the Soviet Union.

"And these precedents have not been lost on India and Pakistan. We also seem to be taking the lead in establishing a wider Pacific security area, based on our commitment to an Asia-Pacific free trade community."

The argument that America's free trade strategy involves a more extensive security commitment, rather than Britain's economic dominance of the 19th century required a Pax Britannica to police it, is made most bluntly by Ben Schwarz of the Rand Corporation, the think-tank whose new focus on trade issues is indicative of the shifting grounds of the U.S. strategic debate.

"Underpinning U.S. world order strategy is the belief that America must maintain what is in essence a military protectorate in economically critical regions to ensure its vital trade and financial relations will not be disrupted by political upheaval," Mr. Schwarz suggested.

He cites the former secretary of state Dean Rusk on Vietnam, arguing that "the U.S. is safe only to the extent its total environment is safe." He quotes the 1992 draft of the Pentagon's Defence Planning Guidance, which says the U.S. "will retain the pre-eminent responsibility for addressing selectively those wrongs which threaten not only our interests but those of our allies and friends, or which could seriously unsettle international relations."

This would not only overstretch U.S. resources, he argues, but would also lead to the collapse of a U.S.-run world order, because "the worldwide economic

system the U.S. has protected and fostered has itself largely determined the country's relative economic decline. Economic power has diffused from the U.S. to new centres of growth. U.S. hegemony, perforce, has been undermined."

If the U.S. public is only dimly beginning to perceive this, those subject to the Pax Americana believe there is no drift to isolationism. Quite the reverse. A senior Asian diplomat, who insisted on anonymity, suggests there is an extraordinary divergence of view about U.S. policies taking place between the Europeans and the Asians.

"All my European colleagues worry about the U.S. turning its back on them, while a lot of my Asian colleagues are concerned that the U.S. is trying to get too involved in Asia; is interfering too often and too bluntly."

"You have to have been on the receiving end of what is called U.S. trade diplomacy to realise it is not very diplomatic at all. They may say they simply want open markets and free trade, but what they mean is that we are supposed to become more like them. They want to change our distribution and retail system to suit their exporters, and change our finance system to suit their banks."

"They want us to swallow an American culture of CNN and Hollywood, insist we welcome their rude and intrusive media, while they lecture us on human rights. The cultural arrogance of a country with such problems of race and crime is breathtaking to people on our side of the Pacific. Frankly, there are times when rather more American isolation would be most welcome."

The Guardian

Letter from Manama 'Only an accountable government can tackle social problems'

IN THE circumstances, "I survived Bahrain 1994" is either a bold or a foolish slogan with which to adorn a T-shirt. Yet there the item hangs in an open-fronted shop near Bab Al Bahrain.

There in the heart of Manama, the capital of this little island state, stepped-up police patrols are supplemented by desultory groups of riot police bunched around the mosque at the junction of Street 121 and Bab Al Bahrain. Sipping tea, sitting in cars and trucks, they are fed up rather than ferocious. Their equipment looks to be from sale — a few riot shields with matching helmets and clubs (condition fair), a clutch of carbines (vintage), a CS gas gun (used), and an aged sub-machine gun (handle with care).

But Manama is quiet. There was one day of unrest when the Bab Al Bahrain police post was attacked, causing great embarrassment to the authorities but little other damage. Indeed, it is by listening rather than looking that the visitor apprehends the situation. A friend apologised profusely: Do I understand his position and why we cannot meet and why I should talk only to the ministry about "the events"?

In the same breath as forecasting lower temperatures for Wednesday, a cab driver forecasts riots on Thursday. The chat at pre-lunch drinks among European expatriates centres on a firebomb attack on a compound generator the previous night, neither the first nor the last. The nervous have been phoning their embassies for advice.

In a village, a shopkeeper locks up and leads me down a side road after a minimum of polite conversation. I am bundled into a comfortable house where two men recount the killing of a close family member by the security forces, the fatal shooting of a local youth, house raids, helicopters buzzing the village, detention without charge. My hosts are educated and middle-class. They have not signed the petition but now they want a return to constitutional rule and, like other professional and managerial Bahrainis, they sympathise with the unemployed rioters.

Leading signatories of the 20,000 strong petition for a return to constitutional rule after 20 years are at home in the coffee lounges of international hotels where they nod easily to acquaintances. They are professional men in their middle years, moderates abhorring violence. They have no direct control over the rioters but believe only accountable government can tackle social problems.

The link between the intellectuals of this generation and the unemployed in the villages is a batch of Shi'ite preachers, men like Ali Salman and his three colleagues, all deported in January. They have talked of a constitution suspended before many of the young unemployed were born and made links between economic and political conditions.

For this role the government damps them as Iranian stooges. A leading local businessman with no political involvements shakes his head at the ploy, remarking that, even if it were true — as it palpably is not — it would be irrelevant as unrest can only occur where discontent already exists.

The local press abounds with ill-judged editorialising. Akhbar Al Khali denounces the BBC and AFP and then progresses to an accusation that the Western media is engaged in an organised campaign against the Gulf states. The English-language Gulf Daily News damned the BBC for being in the pocket of Iran after it interviewed a self-style human rights activist. The British embassy has been fielding government complaints about BBC coverage of events.

Paid as little as 40-60 dinars per month, the Asian migrant workers who comprise over half the workforce stand aside from the protests. Living cheek-by-jowl, their relationship with native Bahrainis is good and they have not been attacked during the unrest. But when unemployment is the trigger for unrest and government is willing to play the chauvinist card, there must be a danger of scapegoating.

Middle East International.



U.S. military personnel arrive in Mogadishu as part of an advance planning team for the U.N. withdrawal from Somalia (AFP photo)

Somalia: To some Americans, a metaphor for failure

By Donald M. Rothberg
The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Everything the U.S. Congress thinks is wrong with U.N. peacekeeping is contained in the memory of a single deadly clash in the streets of Mogadishu.

The memory is faulty but its impact on U.S. relations with the United Nations endures.

"Do you remember the Somalia debacle where we lost some 44 young Americans?" Rep. Toby Roth, a Wisconsin Democrat, asked the House during debate on legislation to cut back U.S. support for peacekeeping.

"When the bodies were dragged through the streets of Mogadishu?" he continued, recalling the most horrifying image from an October 1993 clash that left

18 Americans dead.

In the eyes of a majority in Congress, Somalia was a U.N. operation gone wrong. The result, nearly a year and a half later, is Republican-sponsored legislation that would reduce U.S. support for U.N. peacekeeping and restrict the president's authority to place American troops under foreign commanders.

"It's a very unfortunate situation that Somalia has been translated in our public mind as a kind of metaphor for failure," said Chester Crocker, who served as assistant secretary of state for African affairs under president Reagan.

"It's a grossly inaccurate picture of the operation," Mr. Crocker said that perception "became a foreign policy failure for Bill

Clinton. But the operation saved maybe half a million lives."

Ironically, the House debate took place as an international force including more than 7,000 Americans was gathering off the coast of Somalia to help evacuate the last 2,400 U.N. peacekeepers, troops from Pakistan and Bangladesh.

No more than a week is the Pentagon prediction of how long the latest Somalia operation should take.

But on the horizon is a troubled world are plenty of candidates for future missions.

The government of Croatia is demanding the withdrawal of U.N. peacekeepers from its territory, making that former Yugoslav republic another potential locale for a U.S.-

led evacuation force.

A handful of U.S. troops — no more than 10 are contemplated — will be part of an inter-American force monitoring the ceasefire that halted a three-week border war between Ecuador and Peru.

President Clinton has said he would consider U.S. participation in peacekeeping forces to help implement peace agreement in Bosnia and between Israel and Syria.

He said he would act only with the agreement of Congress. With the bitter memory of Somalia, that might not be easy to obtain.

How much of a disaster was Somalia?

"It's important to recognise the positive aspects of our mission there," Secretary of State Warren Christ-

opher said Monday. He added that in many areas of Somalia, conditions are much better than they were earlier.

At a Pentagon briefing last month, Edward Warner III, the assistant secretary of defence responsible for peacekeeping operations, said many members of Congress "thought that the Americans who so tragically died in October 1993 were under U.N. operational control, which was not the case."

They were army special forces who were never under foreign command.

More valid, said Mr. Crocker, is the criticism of the administration and the United Nations for changing the Somalia operation from a humanitarian mission to a effort to

apprehend clan leader Mohammad Farrah Aidid.

"We had a wholly different mandate that was far beyond the reach of either the U.S. or the U.N.," he said.

At the time, there was a widespread feeling that if Somalia were ever to have a viable government the power of the warring clans had to be ended.

That led to a far broader mandate that Mr. Crocker said was a misjudgement in that "it made one of the major players in Somalia politics our enemy."

Looking to the future, Mr. Crocker said "there's a lot of test cases (of peacekeeping) coming up," citing Angola and the border between Israel and Syria among them.

Rogue trader vanishes despite Asia-wide search

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — An Asia-wide search for Barings trader Nick Leeson has found little more than rumours and officials conceded Wednesday the man who broke Britain's oldest merchant bank has vanished "into thin air."

A Malaysian police source said they believe Mr. Leeson slipped out of Malaysia after checking out of the Regent Kuala Lumpur Hotel Friday. "He disappeared into thin air," the police source told Reuters in Malaysia's capital of Kuala Lumpur.

"Leeson is probably out of Malaysia by now but we are still looking for him as requested by Singapore police," the source said.

Singapore's commercial affairs division wants to question the Barings futures general manager for Singapore, with a view to determine whether he should be charged with fraud and sabotage, the Singapore Straits Times said Wednesday.

Mr. Leeson is the missing link in the loss of an estimated \$1 billion for the merchant banking giant in risky derivatives trading on Japanese stock markets.

He was last seen checking out of the Kuala Lumpur Regent Friday after arriving the night before. Mr. Leeson arrived in Malaysia at least 24 hours before the magnitude of the losses became widely publicised.

South East Asian police forces were checking a myriad of Mr. Leeson sightings in various hotels and watering holes between Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok as the search entered its fourth day.

New details about the life of the 28-year-old futures trader, described by some of his colleagues as a quiet, likeable fellow who enjoyed playing soccer, and by others as an arrogant bon vivant who enjoyed life in the fast lane.

The Singapore Business Times reported Wednesday that he was fined for indecent exposure last year.

Mr. Leeson "dropped his pants in front of a group of women" at a Singapore discotheque about five months ago, the newspaper said.

"When they asked him to apologise, he dared the women to report the matter to the police and handed them his handphone," the newspaper said. "The women promptly phoned the police and Leeson subsequently found himself before a magistrate and was fined \$2,000 (\$140) for indecent exposure."

The British Broadcasting Corporation reported that Mr. Leeson, on holiday a week before he disappeared, boasted to his golfing partners that he had already made enough money at Barings to retire in a year.

Police, and his colleagues in the high-flying financial world, speculated that Mr. Leeson may have tried to cross the country's northern border into Thailand. It was not clear whether Mr. Leeson's wife, 23-year-old Lisa Sims, was with him.

Barings collapse unlikely to spur repatriation of Arab Gulf funds

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The collapse of the British bank Barings is unlikely to trigger a repatriation of Arab Gulf overseas investments or reverse a steady capital flight prompted by political and economic restrictions, bankers said Wednesday.

Although Gulf investors have suffered from losses in previous market upheavals, they remain reluctant to bring back their money, saying the local market is relatively small, investment opportunities are limited and economic and political guarantees are not enough.

"Even if some Arab investors think of moving part of their investment to a safer place, I do not expect it to be here," a Gulf bank manager said. "Previous experiences have shown they still prefer foreign markets as they make more profits and political stability make them feel safe."

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, the biggest oil producers in the world, account for a large part of total overseas Arab assets, estimated independently at between \$600 billion and \$800 billion.

Official figures showed inter-Arab investment stood at only \$12.2 billion at the end of 1993 despite recurrent calls for bringing back capital from abroad to finance development in the region.

According to the bankers, Arab assets abroad include between \$200 billion and \$300 billion in stocks and equities, \$260 billion in bank deposits and the rest in real estate and other sectors.

Official figures showed GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — own

nearly \$400 billion in investment in the United States alone.

According to the UAE Sharjah chamber of commerce and industry, Arabs lost nearly \$12 billion in those investments in 1994 due to a decline in stocks and the U.S. dollar. The biggest Arab loss is believed to have occurred during the world stock market crash in 1987, when GCC investors were said to have suffered from a decline of more than \$25 billion in their assets.

"A loss of one billion dollars by Barings bank does not mean you can no longer make profits," a UAE banker said. "The loss was caused mainly by one person and it was due to highly speculative trading. Loss could occur anywhere no matter where the investment is placed."

Bankers said most of the Arab funds abroad were invested in relatively secure sectors such as banks, real estate, treasury bills and government bonds.

They are also kept away from speculation as regional governments and individuals opt for fixed income in the long run.

Economists said shares in the Gulf were now yielding more than in external markets but they noted regional exchanges were relatively small as governments have a high ownership and dealing is restricted to nationals.

Official Arab figures showed key regional institutions have a tendency to diversify their investments abroad to offset any loss in one sector.

One of those institutions is the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund, which has reported steady profits from its overseas investment over the past decade.

Another institution is the UAE central bank, which said last year it had switched from bank deposits to treasury bills and government bonds to avert losses from a decline in interest rates and economic recession in the West.

From around \$3.3 billion at the end of 1992, its deposits were slashed to \$1.6 billion at the end of 1993. Most of the money removed from banks were invested in bills and bonds, which surged by 103 per cent to around \$4.19 billion from \$2.07 billion.

A recent opinion poll by the Arab League's main investment body, the Arab Corporation for Investment Guarantee (ACIG), found internal political instability was the main factor for scaring away Arab investors.

There are several obstacles for investment in the Arab World," it said. "But political instability and uncertainty remained the main hurdle for the fifth year according to Arab investors surveyed by ACIG."

Marrion Merrell, Hoechst confirm acquisition talks

KANSAS CITY, Missouri (AP) — The German chemical and drug company Hoechst A.G. is negotiating to buy Marion Merrell Dow Inc. in what could be one of the largest acquisitions in the pharmaceutical industry, the companies confirmed Tuesday.

The proposed deal, worth about \$7 billion, would create a strong position for Hoechst in the U.S. drug market, Fred Lyons, Marion chairman and chief executive officer, said Tuesday.

"This is good news," Mr. Lyons said at a news conference. "We're very pleased that it has progressed this well."

The plan calls for Hoechst, the world's fourth-largest pharmaceutical company, to acquire the outstanding shares of Marion Merrell Dow at a cost of \$25.75 per share. The deal would boost Hoechst's position in the drug industry to No. 3.

Dow Chemical Co., of Midland, Michigan now owns about 71 per cent of Marion's outstanding common stock so the deal would have to be approved by the boards of directors of all three companies, Mr. Lyons said.

The U.S. pharmaceutical industry has been consolidating for more than a year, largely due to a squeeze on profits prompted by the growth of cost-conscious managed care health plans. These plans, such as health maintenance organisations, buy large amounts of drugs and demand deep discounts.

Rumours of a linkup between Hoechst and Marion first surfaced last summer after Marion said it was considering "strategic alternatives" that included sale of the company. Marion is considered among the weaker of the top U.S. drugmakers.

Financial Markets

Jordan Times

in co-operation with

Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Current	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound*	1.5835	1.5799**
Deutsche Mark	1.4622	1.4514
Swiss Franc	1.2376	1.2359**
French Franc	5.1405	5.1360**
Japanese Yen	98.74	98.51

* 100 J.D. = 1 U.S. Dollar
** European Central Bank 1994 rates

European Currency Unit

Currency	1 MYR	3 MYR	6 MYR	12 MYR
U.S. Dollar	5.81	5.93	6.12	6.50
Sterling Pound	8.18	8.43	8.81	9.43
Deutsche Mark	4.75	4.81	5.00	5.50
Swiss Franc	3.37	3.42	3.61	4.12
French Franc	6.12	6.25	6.50	6.87
Japanese Yen	2.06	2.06	2.06	2.12
European Currency Unit	6.21	6.27	6.56	7.00

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. \$100,000 or equivalent.

General Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

U.S. Dollar

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6930	0.6950
Sterling Pound	1.0567	1.0522
Deutsche Mark	0.4750	0.4774
Swiss Franc	0.5610	0.5636
French Franc	0.1349	0.1356
Japanese Yen	0.7171	0.7207
Dutch Guilder	0.4236	0.4257
Swedish Krona	0.0417	0.0419
Italian Lira	0.0417	0.0419
Belgian Franc	0.0417	0.0419

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Baharaini Dinar	1.8250	1.8410
Lebanese Lira	0.041875	0.042180
Saudi Riyal	0.1845	0.1860
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3500
Qatari Riyal	0.1845	0.1918
Egyptian Pound	0.1850	0.2085
Omani Riyal	1.7910	1.8100
UAE Dirham	0.1847	0.1900
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.4350	1.5125

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Baharaini Dinar	1.8250	1.8410
Lebanese Lira	0.041875	0.042180
Saudi Riyal	0.1845	0.1860
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3100	2.3500
Qatari Riyal	0.1845	0.1918
Egyptian Pound	0.1850	0.2085
Omani Riyal	1.7910	1.8100
UAE Dirham	0.1847	0.1900
Greek Drachma	0.2725	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.4350	1.5125

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	Canadian dollar
1.3942/52	Deutsche marks
1.4630/40	Dutch guilders
1.6398/08	Swiss francs
1.2390/00	Belgian francs
30.13/17	French francs
5.1395/45	Italian lire
1643.8/6.8	Japanese yen
96.70/80	Swedish crowns
7.3375/75	Norwegian crowns
6.4680/30	
5.8210/69	
\$1.5802/12	
One sterling	
One ounce of gold	\$376.20/376.70

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COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	TRADED	VALUE	PREV. CLOSING	CHANGE
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	5600	23255	4,500	4,550	-50
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	2550	12113	4,350	4,370	-20
CALIDA AMMAN BANK	1384060	6574285	5,000	4,750	+250
BANK OF JORDAN	1000	3600	3,600	3,600	0
THE HOUSING BANK	1550	9486	6,060	6,120	-60
JORDAN TRAVEL BANK	1001	3003	3,000	3,000	0
JORDAN GULF BANK	1450	1994	1,360	1,370	-10
JORDAN SECURITIES BANK	1335713	534174	3,900	3,910	-10
BUSINESS BANK	1600	6328	3,820	3,500	+320
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	94743	121336	1,270	1,290	-20
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	3700	5308	1,430	1,440	-10
BANKS SECTOR	2833287	12103261	INDEX NUMBER: 161.40	CHANGE: +0.17%	
JORDAN INSURANCE	20559	69901	3,400	3,400	0
MIDDLE EAST INSURANCE	247500	866250	3,800	3,500	+300
YARMOUK INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	9000	27900	3,150	3,100	+50
INSURANCE SECTOR	277059	964051	INDEX NUMBER: 137.02	CHANGE: -0.11%	
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	6250	10017	1,590	1,600	-10
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER / NEW	64050	97637	1,500	1,530	-30
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	9650	33273	3,420	3,440	-20
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	200	340	1,200	1,200	0
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	2800	6636	2,370	2,370	0
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	3500	12897	3,610	3,680	-70
SERVICES SECTOR	85450	160700	INDEX NUMBER: 133.50	CHANGE: +0.55%	
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	6651	14043	3,020	3,020	0
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	1734	6829	3,980	3,900	+80
THE JORDAN WORTED MILLS	1200	9191	7,630	7,650	-20
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	57450	264781	4,590	4,650	-60
THE JORDAN STEEL MANUFACTURING	1925	6185	2,670	2,680	-10
SPINNING & WEAVING	300	759	2,550	2,530	+20
RAPHA INDUSTRIES	1500	4415	2,930	2,930	0
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	3050	24322	7,980	7,950	+30
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	5500	5430	1,960	1,960	0
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	1050	7008	6,700	6,700	0
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	12050	9380	760	790	-30
JORDAN PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	1300	1885	1,440	1,450	-10
JORDAN ROPEWORK INDUSTRIES	2300	3046	1,350	1,320	+30
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MOULDING	2800	2184	1,770	1,780	-10
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	500	2375	4,750	4,750	0
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	1500	2520	1,690	1,680	+10
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	250	663	2,640	2,650	-10
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	2100	4467	2,100	2,130	-30
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	1021310	368765	INDEX NUMBER: 123.82	CHANGE: +0.05%	
GRAND TOTAL	3298106	13596776	INDEX NUMBER: 143.89	CHANGE: +0.16%	
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	1	122100			
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET	1	171178			

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Hundreds arrested after Chelsea defeat

Juventus earn draw; Bayer Leverkusen bury Nantes

BRUSSELS (AFP) — At least 350 Chelsea supporters were reported to have been detained by Belgian police during and after Tuesday night's high-risk European Cup Winners' Cup clash between the English Premiership club and Belgian side FC Bruges.

Police were reported to have turned water-canon on departing fans after the English side's 1-0 defeat in the first-leg of the quarter-final clash — Verheyen scoring the Bruges winner eight minutes from time.

Mounted police were also said to have charged a section of the crowd as they scuffled near the stadium and there were reports that many Chelsea fans had been injured.

Earlier one Belgian fan was reported to have been stabbed but not seriously hurt.

The match took place amidst a massive police presence prompted by the crowd trouble which halted England's friendly international against Ireland two weeks ago.

The Belgians had also been determined there would be no repeat of the Heysel Stadium tragedy when thirty-nine fans died after a wall collapsed as Liverpool fans rioted before the 1985 European Cup final against Juventus.

After his side's defeat, Chelsea manager Glenn Hoddle said he thought a 1-0 result for the return in London in a fortnight was "not insurmountable."

"We're a little bit disappointed we didn't come away with a 0-0 draw. But this is a good result for us."

Another team who could feel well-satisfied with a 1-0 defeat were Germany's Borussia Dortmund in the UEFA Cup.

They were beaten by Lazio



FC Bruges and Chelsea supporters clash in the streets prior to the European Cup Winners' Cup match in Bruges Tuesday (AFP photo)

In Italy after a 67th minute own-goal by Freund. Earlier Lazio's Giuseppe Signori had hit the German post twice.

Juventus, despite the absence of injured Roberto Baggio, went one better than either Chelsea or Borussia Dortmund. They forced a 1-1 away draw in their UEFA Cup showdown at Eintracht Frankfurt.

The Italian league leaders went ahead against the run of play in front of a 40,000 crowd thanks to a neat 36th minute goal by Giancarlo Marochi.

The goal was set up by a Gianluca Vialli backheel, Marochi shooting home into the right corner.

But the Germans, who had called in vain for a first-half penalty after Juventus's French international Didier Deschamps appeared to

handle just in front of goal, hit back after the interval.

Just when the visitors appeared to be heading for a surprise win and with just 17 minutes remaining, Polish international Jan Furtok poached an equaliser in the six-metre area.

Nantes, unbeaten in 27 matches in the French first division so far this season, crashed badly in their first-leg UEFA Cup clash against Bayern Leverkusen. They went down 5-1.

The German side, despite indifferent league form, showed that they can turn on the magic on the big occasion.

Three sendings-off and five bookings testified to the intensity of the tie.

Nantes, who were reduced to fielding their fourth-string goalkeeper because of a

series of injuries, were 2-0 down after 19 minutes. But Jean-Louis Garcia in goal was not really to blame for either.

He was unsighted by Rudi Voeller when Hans-Peter Lehmann fired the home side ahead from 20 metres after just nine minutes. And the little hope of cutting off a careless back pass from Christophe Pignol which was snapped up and netted by international striker Ulf Kirsten.

To their credit Nantes bounced back but striker Nicholas Ouedec hit the post from a Christian Karembeu through ball in the 34th minute.

In the 64th minute Ouedec made no mistake from the penalty spot — his eighth goal in Europe this season — but one minute later Portu-

guese referee Montero Corrado sent off Nantes captain Jean-Michel Ferri for a tackle from behind.

It was the signal for two goals from Brazil attacker Paulo Sergio, who slammed in a near-post header to put the home side 3-1 up in the 79th minute from an inch-perfect cross from Pavel Hlapal, the Czech defender.

Four minutes later Sergio, powering through on a swift counter-attack, slid home his second.

Kirsten supplied the killer blow to Nantes' European dreams from a perfect backheel by Heiko Scholz with one minute to go.

The drama was not over. With only seconds remaining both Reynald Pedros of Nantes and Christian Worms of Bayer were sent off after a midfield scuffle.

Mexico drops bid for 2002 World Cup

ZURICH (R) — Mexico has told FIFA that it no longer wants to host the 2002 World Cup finals, leaving Japan and South Korea as the only candidates, world soccer's governing body said on Wednesday.

FIFA said it had received an official statement from Mexican officials on Tuesday — the deadline for confirmation of bids — informing it of their decision to discontinue their bid.

A FIFA statement gave no reason for the Mexican decision not to bid for the chance to host soccer's showpiece event for what would have been the third time. Mexico hosted the World Cup finals in 1970 and 1986.

But the Central American country is in the midst of financial and political turmoil that may well have weakened its chances of gaining FIFA support. FIFA President Joao Havelange has also said that he wants the 2002 finals to be held in Asia for the first time.

South Korea and Japan now have until September 30 this year to prepare full candidature files and present them to FIFA, which would then organise inspection visits.

FIFA's executive committee will decide between the two Asian rivals in June next year.

Rush equals record as Liverpool go through

LONDON (AFP) — Liverpool beat 'jinx' rivals Wimbledon 2-0 at Selhurst Park to reach the quarter-finals of the FA Cup Tuesday night while their veteran Welsh striker Ian Rush scored his 41st goal in the competition to equal Denis Law's post-war record.

Liverpool, who have won only twice in their last 12 matches against the London Premiership club, went clear when John Barnes nodded home Jamie Redknapp's free-kick in the tenth minute.

Liverpool then put the issue beyond doubt seven minutes before half-time when Barnes clipped a teasing ball into the heart of the Dons' central defence, leaving Rush to extend a long leg and steer the ball delicately out of the reach of goalkeeper Hans Segers.

It was Rush's first goal in 10 games, his 14th this season, and his 334th from 618 club matches.

Wimbledon, unlucky to emerge with only a draw at Anfield 11 days ago, never looked to recover from the early setback but they battled manfully until the last whistle.

Liverpool's speed and inventive passing, however, made the difference and proved too much this time for Joe Kinnear's side, who lost striker Efan Ekoku and centre-half Andy Thorn to first-half injuries.

BRITISH SOCCER

In the night's Premiership clash, Newcastle flashed a defiant message from Portman Road to pacesetters Blackburn and Manchester United by scoring a 2-0 win over Ipswich.

Kevin Keegan's side made it clear they do not consider the title race beyond them as they surged clear with first-half goals from Ruel Fox and Paul Kinson.

The victory left Newcastle six points behind Manchester United and nine adrift of Blackburn.

Ipswich matched the visitors for much of the first-half, but long before the end of the second they looked well beaten and their fourth successive defeat leaves them struggling second from bottom.

Manager George Burley brought in 19-year-old New Zealander Lee Norfolk for his debut in midfield, but veteran John Wark made errors which cost Ipswich dearly.

The 38-year-old player also came close to being sent off in his 650th Ipswich appearance.

He collected a booking for the 12th-minute foul on Peter Beardsley that led to Newcastle's first goal, and then was lucky to escape further punishment from Worcester referee Gerald Ashby for a challenge from behind that left Robert Lee needing treatment.

The former Liverpool star also blundered badly to let in Paul Kinson for Newcastle's 39th-minute second goal.

FIFA team to visit Nigerian soccer venues

ZURICH (R) — A team of experts from FIFA's medical committee and the World Health Organisation (WHO) will visit Nigeria later this week for an on-the-spot assessment of the health situation there, a senior FIFA official said on Tuesday.

The visit follows vigorous protests from the organisers of the Under-20 World Youth Championship after FIFA, world soccer's governing body, cancelled the tournament because of reported outbreaks of meningitis and cholera at two of the four competition venues.

The cancellation caused outrage in Nigeria, which promptly protested that there were no epidemics anywhere near the stadiums in question.

FIFA backtracked and announced the championship was temporarily suspended pending an on-the-spot investigation by a team of medical experts from FIFA and the WHO.

"We need a report on the situation in Nigeria as soon as possible. The committee for emergency matters will decide on the next step based on the experts' assessment," said deputy general secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen. Meanwhile in Lagos, Nigerian officials said they were optimistic FIFA restore their right to host the championship.

Officials expressed confidence at a ceremony held to launch the theme music of the games.

"We have mobilised all our resources and are certain that Nigeria will pass the tests of the FIFA health inspection team," said Joseph Ajibola, the spokesman for the organising committee.

"Our streets are now cleaner as there is a daily sanitation exercise. The destitute have been relocated and a sense of order has been infused into Nigerian citizens," Ajibola said.

And preparations for the championship itself, however, are going on as if it has not been suspended. The theme song for the games is titled "welcome." Volunteers who will assist in the successful organisation of the championship are undergoing daily briefing.

A new electronic scoreboard has been installed at the national stadium, Lagos, venue for the opening and closing ceremony while refurbishing work at the stadium in Enugu, Kaduna and Ibadan, other venues for the games, has been completed.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TARIK MANSOUR
1994 Feature Movie Screenplay by

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Neither vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH ♠ A K J 10 6

♥ 10 9 8

♦ 9 7 3

WEST ♠ 7 5 4 2

♥ 8 4 3

♦ A J 7 4 3

SOUTH ♠ 9 8

♥ 8 7

♦ A K Q 10 8 5

The bidding:

North East South West

1 ♠ 2 ♠ 3 ♠ 4 ♠

Pass Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: ♠

There are standard ways of leading a card in a suit partner has bid to see the only friend you have at the table will give you the lead.

Lead high from a doubleton, low from three to an honor, or fourth-highest with greater length. From three low cards the modern choice is to lead low (unless you have railed), while veterans tend to lead top-of-

nothing. But every now and then a hand comes along where the rules should be thrown out in favor of common sense.

For North-South is the ideal contract for this hand. As far as we are concerned, the only choice other than five clubs would be for South to pass.

Assume West makes the normal salacious fourth-best diamond. East wins and the best the defender can do is cash a heart, otherwise East will go to bed with the ace. Declarer can make six club tricks, five spade tricks and a diamond ruff.

Since East has at least five diamonds for the overall, West knows the defender can score at least one trick in the suit. Since it might be vital for West to shift the attack through a holding in the North hand, and since West can never regain the lead, West should alert with the king of diamonds!

One look at dummy should be enough to convince West that it is critical to shift to a heart. The defenders then collect two fast tricks in that suit and declarer is defeated before the play has started.

Samaranch pledges support on Belgrade sports embargo

BELGRADE (R) — International Olympic Committee chief Juan Antonio Samaranch pledged the IOC's full backing on Tuesday to get a sports embargo against ramp Yugoslavia lifted definitively.

"The IOC will do everything in its power to have the sports sanctions against Yugoslavia definitely lifted in April," he told a news conference in Belgrade.

"I hope to have good news by that time," he said, referring to the expiry next month of a trial period during which U.N. sanctions against Belgrade were eased in certain areas including sports.

The United Nations imposed comprehensive sanctions against Belgrade in May 1992 for its support to Bosnian Serbs fighting in Bosnia.

On October 1, 1994, it eased sports, cultural and travel sanctions for a trial period of 100 days, extended last month for another 100 until mid-April, after Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic cut off the Bosnian Serbs.

"We are convinced you can look into the future with hope and optimism," Samaranch told Yugoslav sport officials.

"We come at a time which is very significant for your sport. You have suffered some very bad moments but right now your future is much brighter than your past."

Milosevic thanked Samaranch "for support which he personally and the IOC extended for reintegration of Yugoslav sports into international sports life," Yugoslav news agency Tanjug said.

Samaranch said he hoped to see Yugoslav athletes compete at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, "without any problems from any federation."

Injury keeps Becker out of Rotterdam Indoor

ROTTERDAM (Agencies) — German top seed Boris Becker withdrew from the men's world indoor tennis tournament on Tuesday without hitting a ball because of knee injuries.

The world number three, who was expected to start his first round on Wednesday against Slovak Karol Kucera, travelled to Rotterdam where the tournament doctor confirmed he was unfit to play.

Tournament director Wim Buitendijk said Becker was suffering from knee strain in both legs.

"It is an injury which appears often with tennis players due to playing a lot," Buitendijk said, adding that he understood Becker would take a couple of weeks off from the circuit.

Meanwhile Wayne Ferreira, the third seed from South Africa, ousted Luiz Mattar of Brazil 6-4, 6-3 to advance to the second round in the \$600,000 ABN Amro Championships.

The only other seed to play was Slava Dosedel, and the seventh-seeded Czech also won easily, beating Christian Ruud of Norway 6-4, 6-1.

Qualifier Omar Camporez of Italy upset Joern Renzenbrink of Germany 6-4, 7-6 (7-2), wildcard Dutch entry Joost Winnink ousted compatriot Sander Groen 6-3, 6-1.

Another Dutchman to advance was Jan Siemerink, a 7-5, 6-3 winner over Carl-Uwe Steeb of Germany. Jeff Tarango downed fellow American Patrick McEnroe 6-2, 6-7 (7-4), 6-2.

The tournament's original second and third seeds, Spain's Sergi Bruguera and Croatia's Goran Ivanisevic, withdrew because of knee injuries in last week's Stuttgart EuroCard Open.

Richard Krajicek, who rose to 10th in the rankings after a five-set victory over Michael Stich on Sunday in the final in Stuttgart, Germany, is also playing. The Dutch star plays Ronald Agener of Haiti.



Boris Becker

Courier, Edberg advance in Scottsdale

Second-seed Jim Courier and third-seed Stefan Edberg won first-round matches at the \$328,000 Mass Mutual men's tennis championships on Tuesday.

Jim Courier of the United States displayed an unrelenting baseline attack to dispatch Frenchman Lionel Roux 7-6 (7-2) 6-4.

Edberg returned to play after a bout with tonsillitis, before struggling past 20-year-old Hendrik Dreekmann of Germany 7-5 3-6 6-4.

The tournament lost two of its top players — fifth-seed Aaron Krickstein of the United States and Thomas Enqvist of Sweden.

Krickstein fell to Russian Andrei Chesnokov 7-6 (7-4), 6-2, and Enqvist, fresh from his second career title last

Sunday in Philadelphia, withdrew with an inflamed right shoulder.

"I expected a tough match from him," said Courier, the former number one in the world who ran his record to 15-2 this season. "We play similar styles and it was a slugfest. Once I got back on serve in the first set, I felt in rhythm. I played a sound tiebreaker and jumped out on him early."

Courier trailed 2-0 to the Frenchman. But the 13th-ranked Courier broke back in the sixth game and won the tiebreak as Roux committed a rash of unforced errors.

In the second set, Courier continued his relentless ground attack and used a decisive break in the seventh game to claim the one-hour, 44-minute match.

Edberg was pleased to get by the first round after being

stunned last year by Spain's Jordi Burillo.

"It was a little struggle, but I'm happy to get through," said the former top ranked player who has fallen out of the top 10 for the first time in nearly 10 years. "I feel fresh right now because I haven't played a lot so far."

Edberg, ranked 15th, displayed his brilliant serve-and-volley style to take the opening set. But Dreekmann, ranked 64th, showed his shot-making ability to level the match.

The 29-year-old Swede broke in the opening game of the decisive set, and held off four break points in the next set, before claiming the match.

Edberg thought Dreekmann's deadly service return failed him last in the two-hour match.

"I think he got a little tense when he had his chances," he said.

Dreekmann, who has been treated for a rotator cuff problem, agreed.

"I think I had many chances to make many breaks but I wasn't aggressive enough with my return."

Krickstein showed a relentless ground attack to take a 4-1 lead and hold a set point at 6-5. But the Russian came back to force the tiebreaker.

Chesnokov continued his success from the baseline, racing to a 5-0 lead in the second set before completing the one-hour, 18-minute upset.

"I played good," said Chesnokov, the world's No. 36 ranked player. "I just battled and made up my mind not to give him an easy point."

Fernandez, Sawamatsu advance at Evert Cup

In Indian Wells, California, eighth-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez advanced to the second round of the \$430,000 Evert Cup on Tuesday with a 6-4, 6-0 victory over Sandra Cacic.

In the only other matches involving seeded players Tuesday, No. 5 Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan rallied to beat

Shaun Stafford and sixth-seeded Amy Frazier were beaten by Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan.

Sawamatsu took advantage of Stafford's exhaustion in winning 6-7 (7-5), 6-1, 6-2, while Frazier lost to Likhovtseva for the second time in two weeks, 7-6 (7-4), 6-4.

In other action Tuesday, Patty Fendick eliminated Ginger Heigson Nielsen 7-6 (7-2), 6-3; Tami Whitlinger Jones outlasted Nana Miyagi of Japan 6-3, 2-6, 6-1; Rachel McQuillan of Australia beat Mariamne Werdell Witmeyer 7-5, 2-6, 6-3; and Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia needed only 49 minutes to overpower Amy Groesbeck 6-1, 6-1.

Top-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, who overtook Steffi Graf this week to become the world's No. 1, received a first-round bye and faces Basuki in a second-round match.

Stafford was no match for Sawamatsu after surviving the first set, and perhaps in frustration, was penalised for audible obscenities twice in the 2-hour, 30-minute match. The second meant a \$1,000 fine.

"I was very tired after that first set," Stafford admitted. "I was fighting for every point. I don't mean to come across as a bad person, it's just how I express myself. I never even finished saying that word (that she was penalised for), and it was directed at myself. It's unusual I would get fined when I didn't direct it to the player or the referee."

Muster routs Pereira at Mexican Open

Thomas Muster, the two-time defending champion, defeating Nicolas Pereira of Venezuela 6-2, 6-1 Tuesday in the first round of the \$330,000 Mexican Open, the first clay tournament of the ATP season.

Muster, the No. 2 seed from Austria, has won 22 titles on clay. Top-seeded Alberto Berasategui, who plays Mark Petchey, has won eight titles on clay, including seven last year.

TODAY	Cinema Tel.: 634144	Cinema Tel.: 699238	Cinema Tel.: 677420	Tel.: 618274 - 618275	Tel.: 675571	Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA	PLAZA	CONCORD	AMMOUN THEATRE	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre	ANLAN THEATRE
	1) Beverly Hills Cop 3 (Eddie Murphy) 2) TOM & JERRY Shows: 11:00, 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.	★ Honey, I Blew Up The Kid ★ The Lion King Evening Shows	Comedian star: Adel Imam — Bakhit & Andadileh Shows: 11:30, 1, 3:30, 6, 8:30, 11 Jean-Claude Van Damme STREET FIGHTER Shows: 11:30, 1:45, 3:15, 5:15, 11:15	Mousa Hijazin "Sumaah" In the political comedy "Hi Citizen" Director: Mohammad Al Snawaqleh Daily starting 8:30 p.m. Monday is the weekly holiday	Presents Abu Awwad In the social comedy Punctured Bag The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day	Presents: The political satire: AL SALAM YA SALAM at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 The theatre is closed on Saturdays & Sundays

Coach Ma Junren planning comeback

BEIJING (R) — Unbowed by throat surgery, appendicitis and a serious car accident, the ousted trainer of China's world-beating 'Ma Junren' running team is planning a comeback, the *Wanbao* newspaper said Wednesday.

"Ma Junren's eyebrow is arched and his nose is askew, but he is still in good spirits," quoted a *Liaoning* sports official as saying.

The controversial coach, who returned to top-level athletics with a new crop of young middle and long distance runners along with a loyal Qu Yunxia, the only member of his 'army' to stick with him after the team collapsed last year, the newspaper said.

Qu is the world 1,500 metres world record holder. China's record breaking women's distance running

team splintered amid allegation that he put too much pressure on his athletes and pocketed their winnings.

Ma, said by one newspaper last month to be despondent and regretful, was unbowed by surgery and a car crashed after his father's death, the newspaper said.

His new team will be in direct competition with the rest of his former 'army' — now called the *Liaoning Women's Distance Running Team* — and its assistant trainer Wang Junxia, who smashed the women's 10,000 and 3,000 metres records in one extraordinary week in August 1993.

"Two members of the squad are even better than Wang Junxia was in the beginning," the newspaper quoted the sports official as saying.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Paris-Beijing Rally on course

PARIS (AFP) — Former Paris-Dakar rally winner and organiser Rene Metge has put together what he calls the 'voyage of a lifetime' with a 10,000km Rally from Paris to Beijing via Moscow. "Apart from the parade through Moscow's Red Square it's completely different from the 1992 rally," he said Wednesday. A Russian international trading company revived an event interrupted by conflicts in different parts of the former Soviet republic. Russian authorities, willing to include the event in celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Great Patriotic War, gave the go-ahead to this year's rally which steers a wide berth of the war in Chechnya. The rally will start on Aug 6 and after driving to Kiel in Germany the competitors will be ferried through the Baltic to St. Petersburg. The plains of Russia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and China will test drivers before they reach Beijing on Aug. 26.

Jailed Turkish soccer star freed

ANKARA (AP) — A court in Istanbul free Turkish soccer star Tanju Colak after he helped the court with investigations which led to the arrest of a car smuggling gang. Colak, the leading scorer in European soccer in the 1987-88 season, had served seven months of a 22-month prison sentence for knowingly buying a smuggled luxury car. He was also fined 772 million lire (\$24,000). Colak told Star TV that he wanted to return to professional soccer as soon as possible. He has reportedly already had several offers from Turkish clubs.

Sumo champion to get Japanese citizenship

TOKYO (AFP) — Hawaiian sumo wrestler Akebono, the first-ever foreign "Yokozuna," or grand champion, said Tuesday he would apply for Japanese citizenship by December. "I will be relieved if I can do it as soon as possible," said the 25-year-old American, whose real name is Chad Rowan. "As long as I want to continue sumo, I must become a Japanese." A tradition-bound sumo rule holds that only a Japanese can obtain the status of a sumo elder, which allows him to become a stablemaster after retirement. Akebono started his sumo career six years ago and has remained ranked at the top for more than two years. Currently, he shares the top position with his rival, Japanese sumo star Takanohana.

Coberger to quit skiing

VIENNA (R) — New Zealander Annelise Coberger, silver medalist in the 1992 Winter Olympics, will retire from Alpine skiing after this season, she said Wednesday. Coberger, 23, the first competitor from the southern hemisphere to win a winter Olympic medal, said she had decided to pursue other interests. "After 12 years without a summer, without a Christmas at home, I have decided it is time to move on to other things," she said in a statement. "I have never had the opportunity to have the normal life of a young person being so far away from my home in New Zealand."

France not asked to pay for sea rescue

ANBERRA (AFP) — France has not been asked to help pay the bill for Australia's rescue of solo yachtswoman Isabelle Autissier, French Minister for Youth and Sport Michelle Alliot-Marie said here Tuesday. Australia spent an estimated 745,000 Australian dollars (\$558,000) rescuing BOC round the world entrant Autissier on January 1 from her dismasted yacht in the Southern Ocean. She was rescued from heavy seas by a naval helicopter after a dramatic search and rescue mission which involved aircraft and a frigate. "I think there's a certain tradition in the area of sea rescue and certainly there has never been any question of payment requested for this year," Alliot-Marie said reporters.

Young fan causes police panic

WELLINGTON (AFP) — When a 12-year-old girl disappeared from her provincial home last week with a backpack filled with 3,000 NZ dollars (\$1,900), police were on edge. But when they finally caught up with her in a luxury hotel she had checked into, she was alone. The 12-year-old was preparing to fly off to Australia after having spent the weekend watching cricket, the *New Zealand Herald* reported Tuesday. The girl, who had already bought her plane ticket to Australia, told the *Herald* she had spent Sunday at a one-day cricket match between Australia and New Zealand. "I'm not missing," she told the *Herald*. "I just left home and I'm not going back. And I don't want anyone to know where I am." She was returned with her parents Tuesday.

Papin denies he is quitting Bayern

MUNICH (R) — Bayern Munich's French international defender Jean-Pierre Papin, whose season has been plagued by injury, quashed rumours on Wednesday that he wanted to leave the German club this year. "I don't want to go. I want to honour my contract until 1996...if Bayern takes its one-year option, even until 1997," Papin, 31, said. He has a lot of aims in Munich. Next year I will have more and then Bayern will see the real champion Papin." Papin has failed to make an impact at the reigning German champions since he came to Munich from AC Milan at the start of the season.

CLA has top spot in college poll

LOS ANGELES (AP) — UCLA received 61 first-place votes to take over the No. 1 ranking in this week's Associated Press college basketball poll. The Bruins (21-2) finished the fifth team in five weeks and the sixth team this season to hold the top ranking. They received 1,642 points in the national media panel to easily beat runner-up North Carolina (21-3), which collected three No. 1 votes and 1,546 points.

O'Neal scores 41 to lead Magic over Knicks

ORLANDO (Agencies) — Shaquille O'Neal had 41 points and Dennis Scott scored 26 as the Orlando Magic strengthened their hold on the top spot in the Atlantic Division with a 118-106 victory over the New York Knicks on Tuesday.

O'Neal scored 14 of his points in the first quarter, when Orlando erupted for 40 points, the most by a New York opponent in any quarter this season.

O'Neal, who also had 10 rebounds, had his seventh 40-point game of the season. Patrick Ewing had 32 points and 15 rebounds, John Starks had scored 19, making five three-pointers for the Knicks, who have lost six of their last seven games in Orlando.

"You can't get too happy about it (the victory) because they're still the team to beat and they're full of veterans," The Knicks committed 18 turnovers, while Orlando turned the ball over just nine times.

In Milwaukee, Glen Rice scored 24 points and the Miami Heat allowed just 32 second-half points on the way to a 95-85 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

Billy Owens added 17 points and 16 rebounds, and Keith Askins had 16 points and 14 rebounds off the bench for Miami.

"I just had confidence in my shot tonight," Askins said. "The coach has confidence in me as well as the team. When they have that confidence, you can come in and take shots like that."

In Washington, Clarence Weatherspoon scored 30 points and Dana Barros had eight of his 19 in the fourth

quarter as the Philadelphia 76ers snapped a four-game losing streak with a 106-102 victory over the Washington Bullets.

Sharon Wright had 17 points for Philadelphia, which won for only the fourth time in its last 18 games.

Juan Howard scored 20 points, Scott Skiles had 19 and Chris Webber 17 for Washington, which lost for the 13th time in 15 games.

In Denver, Dikembe Mutombo scored a season-high 26 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, lifting the Denver Nuggets to their seventh straight home victory, a 114-101 triumph over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

Denver never trailed, scoring the first 12 points of the game.

Jalen Rose had 18 points and seven assists, and Reggie Miller added 15 points for the Nuggets.

Isiah Rider scored 20 points for Minnesota.

In San Antonio, Sean Elliott scored five points in a 12-3 burst that closed the first half and lifted the San Antonio Spurs to their ninth straight home victory, a 90-83 triumph over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

David Robinson scored 18 points and Chuck Person added 17 for the Spurs, who have won six straight games.

In Dallas, Popeye Jones made a three-point play with 23 seconds left to rally the Dallas Mavericks to a 102-101 victory over the Houston Rockets.

Jones followed a miss by Jamal Mashburn, tipping in the shot as he was fouled by the Rockets forward Chucky Brown. Jones made the free throw to give Dallas a 102-

101 lead. Hakeem Olajuwon missed a potential game-winning 12-footer in the lane as time expired.

Mashburn scored 22 points and Jason Kidd added 18 points for Dallas.

In Los Angeles, Michael Smith scored six of his season-high 17 points in a key fourth-quarter run as the Los Angeles Clippers snapped a nine-game losing streak to the Phoenix Suns, 110-99.

Lamond Murray scored 18 points and Malik Sealy added 17 for Los Angeles.

Kevin Johnson scored a season-high 31 points with eight assists for Phoenix, which was without leading scorer Charles Barkley due to a sprained left knee.

Blood vessel problem caused Mullin black-out

Golden State forward Chris Mullin has a blood vessel condition that caused the five-time National Basketball Association All-Star to faint and injure his head.

Mullin, 31, has a vaso-vagal syncope, a condition that reduces the amount of blood flowing to his brain.

"If a person is young and healthy with low blood pressure, they are more inclined to suffer from this symptom," a statement from the Cardiovascular Consultants Medical Group said.

"It is not uncommon to see this vaso-vagal response in young, healthy people who jump out of bed too quickly first thing in the morning."

Mullin fainted at home on February 15 and fell on his back. He hit his head hard enough to cause a concussion.

Mullin has played only two games this season because of various injuries. He resumed light training on Monday, but it was not clear when he would return to the line-up.

Maxwell reinstated by NBA

Houston rockets guard Vernon Maxwell was reinstated by the National Bas-

RESULTS

Philadelphia	106	Washington	102
Orlando	118	New York	106
Dallas	102	Houston	101
Miami	95	Milwaukee	85
San Antonio	100	Cleveland	83
Denver	114	Minnesota	101
LA Clippers	110	Phoenix	99

Jazireh's Bethlehem visit cancelled

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first Jordanian sports team that was to visit the occupied territories since 1967 Wednesday learned that their visas were denied by the Israeli authorities and that they would not be going on their history-making trip after all.

Al Jazireh's women's basketball team was to leave for Bethlehem Thursday at an invitation from the Catholic Action Club where they were to play five matches against Palestinian teams: Orthodox Beit Jala, Sariyet Ramallah, the University of Bethlehem as well as two matches against their hosts.

"We only learned this afternoon that our visas were denied, so the players are surely disappointed since everything was arranged and we were quite enthusiastic about the idea," Al Jazireh's head coach Fadi Al Sabbah Wednesday told the Jordan Times.

The Bethlehem matches would have been a good



Al Jazireh's team

chance for the Al Jazireh to test their preparedness before they leave for Cyprus, March 22-29, where they will be hosted by the Kefalovryssos Club who played in Al Jazireh's international tournament in July 1994.

"We will now focus on our preparations for the Cyprus visit. That will hopefully make up for the players' disappointment," Mr. Sabbah added.

Al Jazireh will be facing stiff competition in Cyprus

where they will be playing alongside the Kalythos Club of Greece, Lebanese champions Homenetmen, Syria's runners up Al Jala', the Catholic Action Club as well as their hosts, Jordan's Al Orthodoxo who have declined the invitation.

Al Jazireh, who won the Kingdom's 1993 champion after joining the women's basketball scene in 1991, are putting the finishing touches before they clash

with reigning champions Al Orthodoxo in the 1995 championship scheduled for mid-April.

Al Jazireh now have 10 players on the initial line-up of the recently re-grouped national team. They include Rana Hussein, Jumana Saiti, Suhair Mackusi, Tamara Al Khadra, Tala Al Mauge, Rania Dajani, Hala Mubeisen and a good group of younger, ambitious players.

China to send athletes who use drugs to jail

BEIJING (R) — China's top sports authorities said some Chinese athletes are still using banned stimulants and unveiled tough anti-doping punishments on Wednesday that could send athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs to jail.

The announcement of the punitive new measures were intended to combat a growing problem in China that became public when 31 Chinese athletes, including a string of swimming stars, tested positive, for such stimulants in 1994.

"Our principle on the problem of stimulants is: Even if these were drugs that couldn't be detected, we will not use drugs," Wu Shaoyu, minister of the state sports commission, told leading sports officials and reporters.

"Even if others use drugs, we will not use drugs and would rather not win medals than use drugs," Wu said.

The commission welcomed an Australian inquiry into doping and published tough draft rules that would land violators in jail, impose heavy

fines, make coaches liable and increase the frequency of out-of-competition tests.

The draft of the temporary regulations banning the use of stimulants in sport, designed to give sports officials legal teeth to clamp down harder on doping, was unveiled at the meeting.

The regulations call for athletes caught using illegal performance-enhancing drugs to be imprisoned and to have their prize winnings seized. They will also be banned from competition and stripped of their titles. He gave no details of the jail terms.

They also face fines of up to five times their winnings, and their coaches, doctors and managers face similar punishment.

China is fighting an uphill battle against doping.

In 1994, 31 athletes, including several world stars, tested positive, up from 24 in 1993, said Yang Tianle, director of the national research institute of sports medicine.

Of the 31, a total of 11

tested positive at last October's Asian Games in Hiroshima. They included world swimming champions Lu Bin and Yang Aihua and five other swimmers, all of whom have been banned from competition for two years.

Yang defended China saying it ranked only second in Asia and 10th in the world in 1993 in terms of numbers of athletes caught using banned stimulants.

Only 1.75 per cent of Chinese athletes tested positive, while 2.42 per cent of Japanese athletes tested positive, he said. Belgium topped

the list with 6.16 per cent, he said.

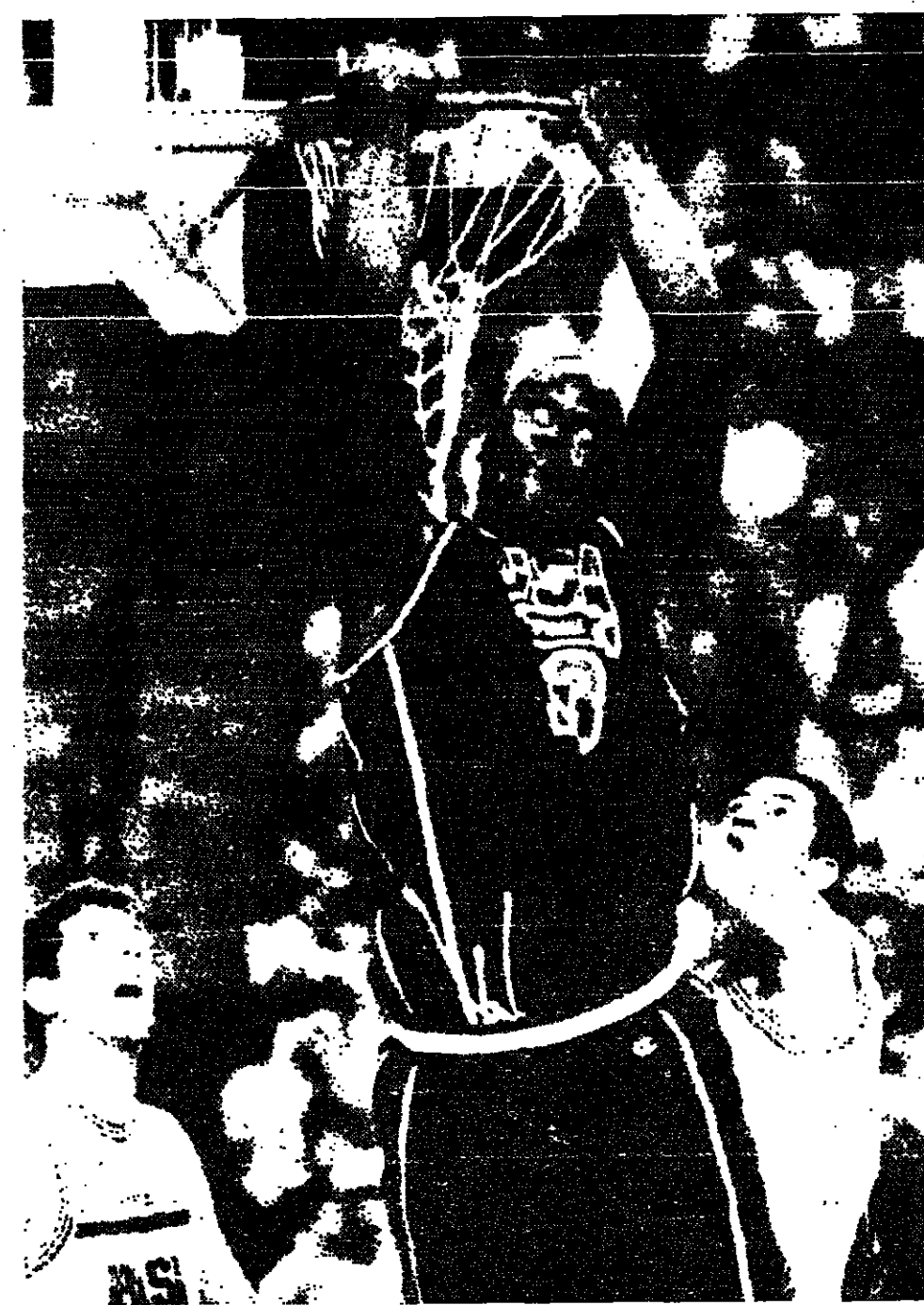
He warned athletes not to use traditional Chinese herbal medicines, saying many may contain banned substances.

China will increase the frequency of out-of-competition tests, he said. It conducted 526 such tests in 1994, up from 315 in 1993, 185 in 1992 and 122 in 1991.

The swimming scandal came as a shock to the sport and an embarrassment to China. Chinese sports officials have vigorously denied allegations of systematic doping.

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Orlando's Shaquille O'Neal slam dunks a basket (AFP)

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Progress in Iraqi-Turkish pipeline talks

BAGHDAD (R) — Ongoing talks on the repair of Iraq's corroding crude oil pipeline through Turkey have made some progress, diplomats said on Wednesday. "The talks on the pipeline are continuing and there is progress," one diplomat in Baghdad said without elaborating. About 27 million barrels of crude oil are trapped in the pipeline closed shortly after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Turkey needs to flush and refill the rusting pipeline. According to U.N. resolutions revenues from the oil pumped should be spent on the purchase of food and medical supplies. The diplomat said the main problem was the distribution of food in northern Iraq, held by rebel Kurds. "Iraq still rejects international supervision (there)," he said.

800 prisoners held incommunicado in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities have been holding more than 800 prisoners incommunicado for over 14 months, forbidding visits by family and lawyers, the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) said Wednesday. Detainees in the high-security block of Tora prison, nicknamed the Scorpion, "have not been able to contact their families or their lawyers" since December 20, 1993, an EOHR report said. The continuing ban contradicts an administrative court ruling issued in April 1994 which abolished the prohibition of visits, the rights group said. The court overruled arguments by the Interior Ministry that the measure was necessary to prevent contacts between "terrorist elements inside the prison and their collaborators outside," it added. The EOHR believed that the ban was "an attempt by officials of the ministry of the interior to obscure the deteriorating living conditions and to prevent prisoners from complaining about torture and ill-treatment they have been subjected to."

Israel's spy master played trumpet

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The outgoing head of Israel's feared internal intelligence agency, the Shin Beth, relaxed by playing trumpet in several leading orchestras. The revelation came Wednesday with the lifting of censorship on the identity of the man known only by the initial "Y" since he took charge of the agency in 1988. Yaakov Peri, 51, found time to use his classical music background without blowing his cover. He appeared notably in the Israeli radio orchestra. Mr. Peri, born in Tel Aviv, joined the Shin Beth in 1966 and climbed the ranks to run occupied East Jerusalem and West Bank for six years. He took over the top job amid a major scandal after it was disclosed in the press that four years earlier the Shin Beth had executed two Palestinians caught alive after hijacking a bus. Mr. Peri was appointed to clean up the agency and also tackle the infatuation which had erupted in December 1987. Israel Radio said that his agents interrogated 26,000 Palestinians in the last seven years, dismantled 3,788 cells and prevented 30 per cent of attempted attacks. At the same time, the Shin Beth became synonymous with torture for the Palestinians. Human rights groups repeatedly charged the ill-treatment is systematic and listed in detail some of the gruesome practices.

84-year-old man dies of stroke after stabbing wife

BEIRUT (AP) — An 84-year-old man died of heart failure Wednesday after stabbing his wife several times with a kitchen knife in a domestic dispute, police said. Tagla Shikrallah Munzir, 63, was hospitalised with critical stab wounds in her neck, chest and abdomen, a police statement said. Shaker Nematollah Munzir suffered the cardiac arrest when police arrived at his home to take him away for interrogation. Neighbours in Munzir's mountain village of 'Ain Al Rihaneh in the Christian heartland northeast of Beirut told police the couple had been constantly arguing.

Kuwaiti court commutes sentences of rape convict

KUWAIT (AP) — The appeals court has commuted to life in prison a death sentence handed down by a lower tribunal against a stateless Arab convicted of abducting and raping a nine-year-old girl in a mosque. A higher court official, speaking Wednesday on condition of anonymity, said the ruling was passed Tuesday. He refused to give details of the session or say on what grounds the sentence was reduced. The criminal court sentenced Abdul Razzaq Aayed, 21, to death on Nov. 12. According to court documents, Aayed lured the girl last July from a shopping centre in the Al Jahra area to a mosque where he raped her "with utter disregard for all religious and moral values." The name of the victim was not released. Aayed can still take his case to the cassation court, the emirate's highest judicial authority. In August, a Kuwaiti man was hanged for abducting and raping a 10-year-old Egyptian girl.

Israel ready for mine-sweeping in Asia, Africa

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is ready to take part in mine-clearance operations in Cambodia, Angola and Mozambique and other developing countries, and foreign ministry said Wednesday. Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin has agreed in principle to requests from several countries and the United Nations for the Israeli army and military industry to take part, a spokesman said. The framework of the mine-sweeping operations is yet to be organised, the spokesman added.

Israel, Madagascar want closer cooperation

ANTANANARIVO (AFP) — A Israeli delegation left Madagascar Tuesday following a 10-day visit aimed at setting up closer ties between the two countries and reestablishing diplomatic relations. The Israeli delegation was the first to visit the southeast African country since the two broke relations in 1973. Sources said another expert-level Israeli delegation will visit Madagascar soon to look into such issues as cotton production, oil-exploration, defense and health.

Iran slams Iraq's stand on POWs

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Wednesday blasted Iraq's "lack of sincerity" concerning the fate of prisoners of the 1980-1988 war between the two countries, state radio said. The Iraqi government said last week that the discovery of the bodies of 3,000 Iranians killed in the war supports its claim that no Iranian Prisoners of War (PoWs) are still held in Iraq. But Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi rejected the explanation, saying "the remark is a new proof of Iraq's lack of sincerity and its suspicious attitude." Iraq is "facing a crisis of confidence in its domestic and foreign relations," he said, quoted by Iranian radio. Tehran held a mass funeral last week for 3,000 soldiers whose bodies were found on the former battlefields of southwestern Iran. Iran says more than 30,000 soldiers and civilians are still missing from the war and claims that thousands are still alive and held prisoner by Iraq. Baghdad denies detaining any prisoners and accuses Iran of raising the issue to avoid disclosing how many casualties it suffered during the war. Iraq also says Iran is still detaining thousands of Iraqi prisoners.

Turkish premier ends Japan trip

TOKYO (AFP) — Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller left Tokyo for home Wednesday at the end of a four-day visit to promote business between the two countries. Ms. Ciller met Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko as well as Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama and other top government officials. In talks with Mr. Murayama on Monday, the two agreed to boost economic ties and boost Japanese investment in the Turkish market. Mr. Murayama offered \$500 million to help cover insurance for trade between Turkey and other nations.

Soccer trouble

A Chelsea supporter is arrested after being caught while trying to climb the fence of Bruges Olympia Stadium on Tuesday during the European Cup Winners Cup tie (AFP photo)



Zhirinovski flies out after visit to Baghdad

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Vladimir Zhirinovski, leader of a Russian ultranationalist party and maverick politician, flew out early Wednesday after a three-day visit to Iraq where he met with President Saddam Hussein and called on Baghdad to join an anti-West coalition, diplomatic sources said.

Mr. Zhirinovski, who heads the Liberal Democratic Party — a strong force in the State Duma, of the Lower House of the Russian parliament — also signed a draft agreement on Russian-Iraqi cooperation. Details of the accord were not available, but it was believed to be an outline for increased trade and industrial cooperation between the two sides.

Another protocol signed by the two sides involve close cooperation between Iraq's National Assembly and Baath Party and the Russian parliament. Mr. Zhirinovski was accompanied by several members of the Russian legislature and businessmen.

It was not immediately known whether Mr. Zhirinovski, a controversial and outspoken figure who often challenges Western norms of protocol, had secured any arrangement under which Iraq would give priority to repaying its debts to Russia after international sanctions on Baghdad are eased.

At the outset of his visit, Mr. Zhirinovski said one of the main objectives of his visit to Iraq was to secure such a commitment. According to the Russian politician, Baghdad owes \$9 billion to Moscow, most of it in arms purchases during the 80s.

Mr. Zhirinovski has often called for an immediate end to the sanctions against Iraq, saying the crippling trade

embargo against that country was aimed at benefiting the U.S. oil-producing allies in the Gulf region.

He has demanded that the Russian government ignore the sanctions and resume full trade with Iraq.

A few members of his party travelled to Iraq in a declared show of solidarity in October when Iraqi military movements near the border with Kuwait had sparked concern that Baghdad was about to launch another invasion of the emirate.

While in Baghdad, Mr. Zhirinovski presented to President Saddam a document that reportedly contained his vision of an "anti-West coalition" and sought the Iraqi leader's signature on the document. It was not known whether President Saddam actually signed the paper.

The Russian politician, whose almost every political move has drawn controversy, described his meeting with President Saddam as "very successful."

While in Baghdad, Mr. Zhirinovski held talks with most Iraqi ministers and his immediate host, Parliament Speaker Saleh Mehdi Saleh, upon whose invitation he paid the trip to Iraq.

Quoted by news agencies in dispatches from Baghdad on Tuesday, Mr. Zhirinovski rejected the latest effort by the U.S. to dent French, Russian and Chinese moves to ease/lift the sanctions against Iraq.

Asked about a tour of U.N. Security Council members by U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright, to campaign against any easing of the embargo on Iraq, Mr. Zhirinovski said: "That is United States policy and not ours. We are against (maintaining) the embargo imposed on Iraq."

French diplomat urges

Iraq to respect U.N. terms

BAGHDAD (R) — Jean-Francois Nodinet, the first French diplomat accredited to Baghdad after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait, said on Wednesday Paris wanted Iraq to comply with all U.N. Gulf war resolutions.

But he said the U.N. Security Council should not ask Baghdad to do more than what these resolutions call for.

"The French line is that... the Iraqi government has to respect all Security Council resolutions."

"But we think we do not have to ask more... we have a text. We have to respect the text," Mr. Nodinet told reporters in his residence in Baghdad.

He said France's decision to restore diplomatic presence in Iraq after a four-year rupture was taken after Baghdad officially recognised Kuwait last year.

"Iraq's recognition of Kuwait was a key step," he said.

He said Paris was waiting what Rolf Ekeus — the U.N. official in charge of dismantling Iraq's banned weapons — would say in his forthcoming report in March.

"If Mr. Ekeus's report is positive, there will be new discussions at the Security Council," he said.

"We can find a reasonable solution," Mr. Nodinet said.

Fresh battles in Bihac

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Fresh fighting was reported in the Bihac enclave of north-west Bosnia on Wednesday. U.N. peacekeepers said.

Rebel Muslim infantry who launched an assault on government fifth corps units in the enclave on Tuesday appeared to be backed up by heavy weaponry from Krajina Serb forces from Croatia, said U.N. spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Gary Coward.

"We observed a tank and two multiple-barrelled rocket launchers moving down to the area the day before yesterday," Col. Coward told Reuters.

More shelling was reported overnight in the north of the enclave south of Velika Kladusa, with some 150 mortar, artillery or tank rounds reported between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m. local, a U.N. spokesman said.

Fighting also flared in the south of the enclave on high ground near Bihac town on Tuesday evening but details were still sketchy.

U.N. observers reported "a lot of shelling" accompanied by small arms fire around the Grabez plateau to the east of the Bihac town, a U.N.-designated "safe area," said spokesman Major Hervé Gourmelon. Mortar bombs or artillery rounds had also landed within the boundaries of the U.N. safe area in the past 24 hours.

The Muslim-led Bosnian government Fifth Corps is surrounded in the pocket by rebel Muslims loyal to local politician Fikret Abdic and allied Serb forces from Bosnia and Croatia.

Heavy shelling erupted on Tuesday near Kladusa, with some 1,000 explosions reported by five p.m. (1600 GMT).

A four-month ceasefire signed on New Year's Eve has failed to end fighting in the Bihac pocket despite repeated attempts by U.N. officials to persuade the combatants to honour the truce.

Rebel Muslims and Croatian Serb forces were not signatories to the ceasefire accord, which is coming under increasing strain.

Sporadic firing was reported elsewhere in Bosnia on Tuesday, with some 50 detonations registered south of Serb-held Doboj.

Abdic and Croatian Serb forces on Tuesday launched new attacks on government lines to the south east of Velika Kladusa, in the north of the pocket, Col. Coward said.

A total of 1,100 heavy weapon detonations were monitored in the area over a 24-hour period Tuesday to Wednesday morning.

In other developments, the U.N. monitored a number of flights by unidentified helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in violation of the no-fly area over Bosnia on Tuesday night, Col. Coward said.

At least one light fixed-wing single-engine aircraft was reported over a highway landing strip, near the government-held town of Tuzla in the northeast of the country, and another at Visoko, near Sarajevo. Unidentified helicopters were also reported in several areas of Bosnia.

Fresh battles in Bihac

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Egypt rejects any deal with Israel over NPT

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt would reject any Israeli compromise offer to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) two years after a global Middle East peace settlement, Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Wednesday.

Mr. Musa told the Arab daily Al Sharq Al Awsat that Egypt would not accept such a commitment because "this is a political issue and extremely serious."

The only acceptable solution would be for the Jewish state to sign the nuclear treaty "given that this state has a nuclear programme of such a scale and aim to provoke suspicion," Musa added.

Israel, which has never acknowledged reports it has 200 nuclear warheads, has steadfastly refused to join the NPT so long as countries such as Iran and Iraq call for its destruction.

According to newspaper reports, however, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is privately considering signing the treaty two years after a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement including Iran.

Egypt has rallied Arab countries to its refusal to sign an extension of the NPT when it comes up for renewal in April unless Israel joins up.

Mr. Musa denied that the United States had put pressure on Egypt to agree to compromise solution to the nuclear dispute (see page 2).

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher starts a new Middle East tour next week partly aimed at persuading Arab countries to sign an indefinite and uncon-

ditional extension of the NPT at an April-May U.N. conference in New York.

U.S. officials have stressed that Washington is backing Israel and hope Egypt will sign an indefinite extension of the treaty.

Egypt's final position will not be announced until the conference when the 170 states which signed the NPT for 25 years in 1970 will vote an indefinite extension or a limited renewal for five, 10, 15 or 25 years.

Mr. Musa said: "Egypt will not accept, as it's being said, a statement in which Israel gives a commitment to sign the treaty after two years, because this subject is political and serious and extremely serious."

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz has said one Israeli proposal was the Israel would promise to sign two years after reaching a comprehensive peace including states like Iran, Iraq and Libya.

But Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, in Cairo last week to discuss the dispute, said this was pure speculation.

A senior Israeli source later said Egypt was no longer linking Israel signing the NPT with Egypt agreeing to extend it when it comes up for extension.

Egyptian officials including President Hosni Mubarak have since restated the direct linkage.

Al Sharq Al Awsat said: "Musa said the acceptable solution was for Israel to sign, especially as it has a nuclear programme which arouses suspicions about its dimensions and aims."

They said any marked activity could also be part of border security measures considering the acute instability across the frontier. Military officials were not immediately available for comment.

Turkey has about 250,000 men which it shifts across the region as needed to combat the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), fighting since 1984 for a separate Kurdish state. More than 15,000 people have been killed in the insurgency.

Turkish units are positioned on the Turkish bank of the river marking the border with Iraq opposite Zakho, the INC said.

It said the scale of the troop movements was at least as large as a mobilisation by Ankara in October-November 1992, when Turkish troops launched a huge operation in northern Iraq against camps of separatist Turkish Kurds.

He said some 20,000 Turkish soldiers took part in the 1992 air and ground offensive, which left more than 1,000 people dead.

Northern Iraq, effectively dissociated from Baghdad's rule since 1991, is run jointly by a KDP-PUK administration based in Erbil but the uneasy partnership has all but crumbled in the latest run of violence.

An allied force based in southern Turkey protects the region against any attacks from Iraqi troops which crushed a Kurdish revolt after Iraq's Gulf war defeat.

Mr. Ataman said Turkey did not dismiss the possibility that PKK could be involved in the Zakho incident.

Malaysia catches another runaway teenager

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Two days after packing a British runaway, Malaysia officials reported Wednesday they had foiled a bid to enter country from New Zealand using his sister's pass.

The 16-year-old Mala had, who arrived two days after 14-year-old Peter I slipped into the country week on his father's pass was caught at the immigration checkpoint at the Su Airport, officials said.

boy, whose family is residing in New Zealand, failed in his bid last Friday to enter Malaysia using his sister's pass.

The boy could be fined 10,000 ringgit (\$4,000) jailed for five years, or both, if convicted. Mr. Aris said action was taken against young Peter Kerry, who deported Monday.

The action was based on human grounds following a plea between the Malaysian government and the British Commission.

Belgium ends conscription

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Belgium ended compulsory military conscription after years Tuesday with the mobilisation of the last 85 strong contingent called to serve the flag.

A final group was a soldier led Adam Huismans, posing the army journal to the news with the war "Adam, the first man Earth, the last Belgian soldier."

Belgium decided July 1992 to end compulsory military service from last year with a view to ending professional army by cutting the number of those serving while maintaining its NATO obligations.

The government then decided to release the last conscripts on Feb. 28. At start of the 1990s, the conscripts numbered 35,000, all of them performing non-operational tasks, a special ceremony in Tugues, northwest of Liege, said that, since the end of Cold War, "the Belgian has participated more in missions abroad which the conscripts' training is less adequate."

Fact that only "one young in four has been doing a year service these past years" because of various exemptions. In 1987, the gien army is set to sh from its current 60,000, including 47,757 professional soldiers.

WISSEMBOURG, France (AFP) — The wreckage of World War II Messerschmitt bomber has been found field near the French German border, officials Tuesday. The plane, built to have been shot down Jan. 14, 1945, was found month by a farmer while his fields who came across metal object. The discovery was kept secret for security reasons. The wreck of ME 262, the first type German jet bomber, timed some 50 live shells which were defused by explosives experts. It was found near the Alsation town Seltz. Among the pieces wreckage still intact is century later were its engines, guns and pilot's undercarriage. A museum has taken charge restoring it and mount public exhibition.

Time runs out for Thai watch peddler

BANGKOK (AFP) — Peddler of phony "Rud and Christian Dior" watches, apparently en route to join Thailand's economic boom, was found at an national trade show peddling Thai products.

The vendor, who offered a variety of fake watches at a "50 per discount" was caught at a disgruntled customer planned to police he had \$3,000 for seven fake pieces, a police official

